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The Memoir of Adolph Mechner: From the years 1897 to 1947

The story of his boyhood in Roumania; as a soldier in World War I; his life as a doctor in Vienna, Austria; the invasion of the Nazis in Austria; his and his families' escape and final safety and reunification in the USA..

Written by: Dr. Adolph Mechner,

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I N T R O D U C T I O N

For a long time, I was thinking of writing an autobiography. My life was full of interesting experiences and I thought that it would be a pity if I would not put them down in writing. When I spoke about them, my children showed great interest in my stories about the past and encouraged me to write a biography.

But, ^{for years} I never found the time for it. My medical practice had grown to such an extent in the last few years that I had to work all day long in my office and then, after my office hours, I had to do paper work till late at night, often beyond midnight till 2 or 3 in the morning. I usually worked 17 to 18 hours a day and never got enough sleep. That went on for many years.

Only after I had retired from medical practice, about ^{in 1975,} 3 years ago, could I start with the writing of the biography which was quite a big undertaking which I hope to finish in about one year.

I am writing the entire biography in English. But my mother-tongue is German, and although I have been living now in the United States for over 30 years and have become sufficiently acclimated to the English language, it must be remembered that I never felt able to express myself adequately in English, and the writing of this biography therefore cost me a disproportionate amount of time and effort.

It is not meant for publication but only for reading by my family. Style was therefore of minor importance, more important facts and data, as precise as possible in simple

sentences, especially for young people, made more interesting by insertion of pictures, geographic maps, important documents, with translations where necessary.

I realize that I have to go far into the past and that I have to write many details about my family. This will therefore not be an auto-biography, but rather a family-biography, limited, of course, to a certain degree. The family was very big and it would be impossible to include great many uncles, aunts, and the more than 100 cousins of Hedy and myself, although some will be included in the course of the narration.

I had the good idea of interviewing some of our relatives and recording their stories on a tape recorder, adding thereby their stories verbatim to this family-biography. They contain many details, about which I had no knowledge or insufficient knowledge, and they will help very much to complete the picture, like pieces of a so-called puzzle or a mosaic.

Although this will cause often repetition of certain events, it will enable the reader to see some persons and some events from different angles. This method of interviewing people with the help of a tape recorder will, I hope, be used later on by my descendants in continuing this biography.

Some of the readers will perhaps find all these details boring, others may find them highly interesting and valuable. There are moments in everybody's life, when one thinks of his ancestors, becomes interested in certain details, perhaps in a mood of melancholia. Then these pages may become help-

ful or perhaps important'.

In many respects this biography will be incomplete, but this is the case with every biography. Of my 8 great-grandparents I knew only one, and of my 4 grandparents I knew only 2, the parents of my mother. Of my parents, I did not know my father, since I was born 8 days after he had died. But I know a lot about him, things that were told to me. About this chapter, I will write later in more detail.

I am writing this biography mainly to show my children, grandchildren, and their progeny, where they came from and what kind of people their ancestors were. They will learn, what difficulties, enormous efforts, sufferings, and often great tragedies combined, to bring them into their present position. Words like difficulties, sufferings, or tragedies are not mere abstractions. They were the realities of our lives, and to really understand them, it was necessary that I explain everything in great detail. Although I will have to describe many tragic events, it is in general a success story. The dark clouds have passed, "and new life has grown out of the ruins". (After Schiller: Wilhelm Tell).

I will have to write a lot about history and geography, in which I have always been very interested. Would that not have been the case, I would not have undertaken to write this biography. I have always tried to be well informed about daily events by reading the newspapers and magazines. My interest in geography stems from my interest in stamps. I was in younger years a philatelist and looked

each country up on the map. This interest increased steadily, although I had given up collecting stamps for long periods of time, sometimes resuming it again in the hope that some of my children or grandchildren will take over one day and continue. But this did not come about. But geographic maps always interest, almost fascinate me. My interest in history has its origin in the gymnasium, when we were learning Latin and later Greek. Later in life there came the great interest in art, architecture, etc., which required knowledge of history and geography, and still later our travels to foreign countries. Wherever we went and still go, visits to museums especially require and enrich our knowledge of history.

I found it necessary to mention all that before starting with the biography. But I don't want to give the impression that I regard myself as an expert in these fields. I have rather to say that my knowledge of history, geography, and art is very limited, but more than sufficient for the writing of this biography.

We lived in a different world. I am now 81 years old, and I found that it was necessary to describe all the details, in order to understand the past better, when reading these lines, 20 or 50 years later, and as an incurable optimist I go even further, to 100 years and beyond.

You will find many grammatical faults and errors in punctuation. I will not make any corrections anymore, as that will be too time-consuming, and I ask you to bear with me.

The insertion of great many pictures enhanced comprehension and appreciation, where descriptions alone would be

insufficient to give a clear picture.

The main purpose of my voluminous description of my experiences and those of many members of my family, who lived in Europe among millions of criminals, who persecuted them and finally killed them, executing a devilish plan of Hitler and the Nazis is to let my descendants, children and grand-children know, where they came from.

It is a heroic story and I wanted my progeny to know their roots, to be proud of their ancestors. I had to go far into the past to show that there were great, noble, high-taught, high-minded persons in our families of whom they can be proud, so that they should never think cheaply of themselves. The roots are strong and good and my grandchildren will find satisfaction and inspiration from my story.

They will read the story again when they will be grown up and understand better what is described. Then they will perhaps continue by adding their own story and that of their own progeny. Vivant sequentes - May others follow.

New York, May 25th, 1978.

Adolph Mechner.

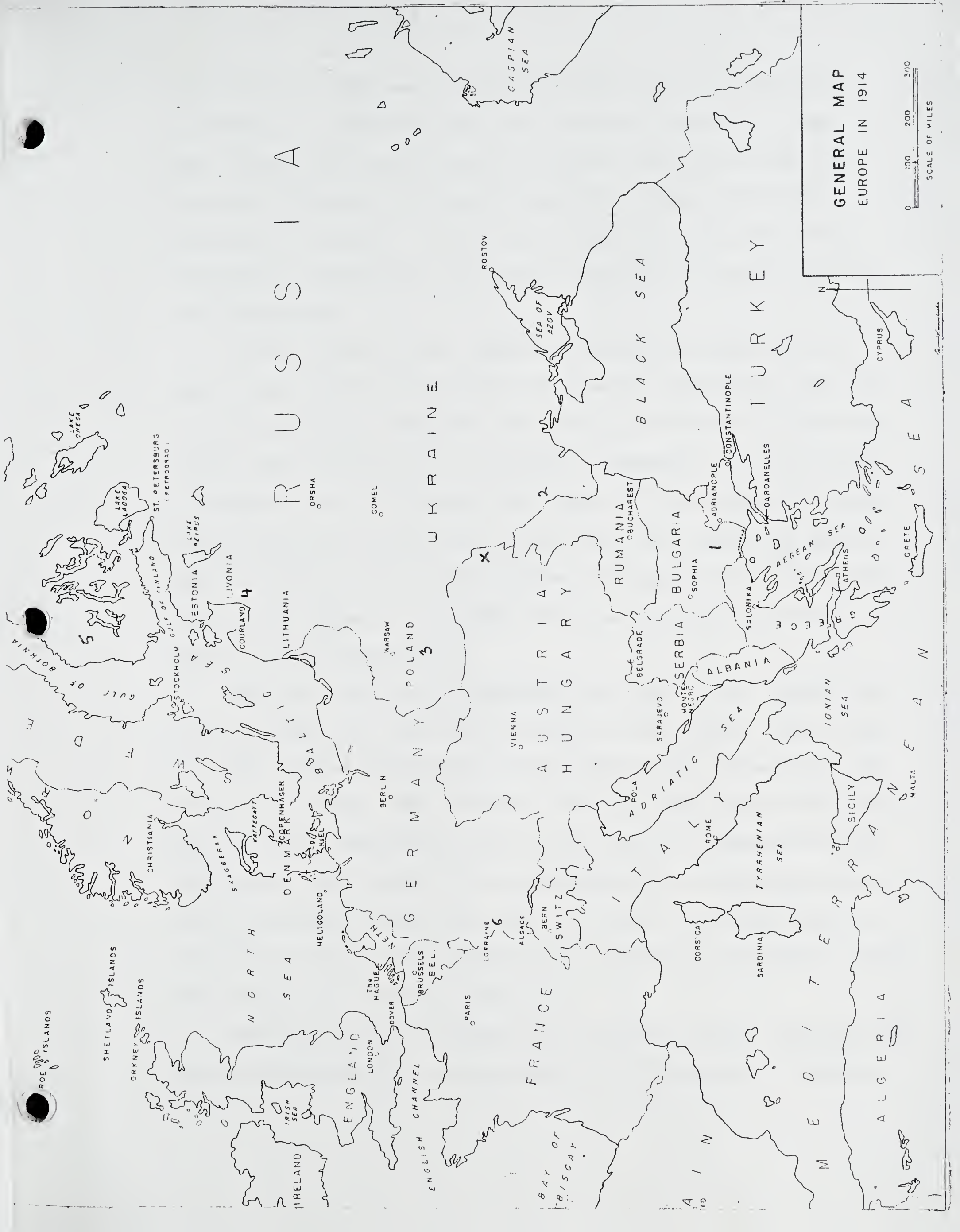
CHAPTER 1

GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY

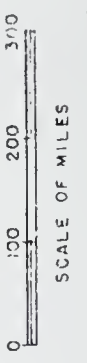
I will have to go far into the past and take you far across the Atlantic Ocean and the European continent to show you where we came from. I was born in Czernowitz, which was the capital of the province Bukowina at the eastern end of the Austrian-Hungarian monarchy, which was a very big country, situated in the center of Europe. (See the attached map). To the north was another big country, Germany, also to the north and east the enormous Russia, to the south relatively small countries, Rumania, Serbia, also to the south Italy, and to the west Switzerland. The map shows the situation before the First World War.

As the name said, the Austrian-Hungarian monarchy consisted of two parts, Austria and Hungary. The emperor Franz Josef I. was emperor of Austria and king of Hungary. Both parts had their own parliaments, Austria in Vienna and Hungary in Budapest. It was a conglomerate, consisting of many provinces, and I will give you the names of all of them in German and, where necessary, also in English, starting in the West at the Swiss border, going around, first to the east and then back to the West and then to the south.

The western-most province was Vorarlberg, then came Tyrol, Salzburg, Ober-Oesterreich, Nieder-Oesterreich, then Maehren (Moravia), from where the family Ziegler originally came, Boehmen (Bohemia), Schlesien (Silesia), from where the family Mechner originally came, Galizien (Galicia), Bukowina, where my hometown Czernowitz was the capital (marked on the



GENERAL MAP
EUROPE IN 1914



SHETLAND ISLANDS
ORKNEY ISLANDS
ROE ISLANDS

IRELAND
ENGLISH CHANNEL
LONDON
DOVER

FRANCE
PARIS
ALSACE
LORRINE
SWITZ
BERN

GERMANY
BERLIN
HAMBURG
KIEL
DANMARK
COPENHAGEN
NORWAY
OSLO
SWEDEN
STOCKHOLM
GULF OF BOTHNIA

RUSSIA
MOSCOW
PETERSBURG
LITHUANIA
POLAND
WARSAW
UKRAINE
KIEV
ROMANIA
BUCURESTI
SERBIA
BELGRADE
ALBANIA
TIRANA
GREECE
ATHENS
TURKEY
CONSTANTINOPLE
MONTENEGRO
SARAJEVO
BOSNIA
HERZEGOVINA
CROATIA
SLOVENIA
HUNGARY
VIENNA
AUSTRIA

ITALY
ROMA
VENICE
GENOVA
MILANO
NAPOLI
PALERMO
SICILY
MALTA
CYPRUS
EGYPT
SYRIA
LEBANON
JORDAN
PALESTINE
ISRAEL
YEMEN
OMAN
SAUDI ARABIA
KUWAIT
QATAR
Bahrain
UAE
OMAN
YEMEN
SAUDI ARABIA
KUWAIT
QATAR
Bahrain
UAE

BLACK SEA
BALTIC SEA
NORTH SEA
IRISH SEA
ENGLISH CHANNEL
DOVER STRAIT
SWANSEA
CARDIFF
BIRMINGHAM
MANCHESTER
LIVERPOOL
GLASGOW
EDINBURGH
DUBLIN
LONDON
PARIS
BERLIN
MOSCOW
ST. PETERSBURG
HAMBURG
KIEL
COPENHAGEN
OSLO
STOCKHOLM
GULF OF BOTHNIA
BALTIC SEA
NORTH SEA
IRISH SEA
ENGLISH CHANNEL
DOVER STRAIT
SWANSEA
CARDIFF
BIRMINGHAM
MANCHESTER
LIVERPOOL
GLASGOW
EDINBURGH
DUBLIN

RUSSIA
MOSCOW
PETERSBURG
LITHUANIA
POLAND
WARSAW
UKRAINE
KIEV
ROMANIA
BUCURESTI
SERBIA
BELGRADE
ALBANIA
TIRANA
GREECE
ATHENS
TURKEY
CONSTANTINOPLE
MONTENEGRO
SARAJEVO
BOSNIA
HERZEGOVINA
CROATIA
SLOVENIA
HUNGARY
VIENNA
AUSTRIA

ITALY
ROMA
VENICE
GENOVA
MILANO
NAPOLI
PALERMO
SICILY
MALTA
CYPRUS
EGYPT
SYRIA
LEBANON
JORDAN
PALESTINE
ISRAEL
YEMEN
OMAN
SAUDI ARABIA
KUWAIT
QATAR
Bahrain
UAE
OMAN
YEMEN
SAUDI ARABIA
KUWAIT
QATAR
Bahrain
UAE

RUSSIA
MOSCOW
PETERSBURG
LITHUANIA
POLAND
WARSAW
UKRAINE
KIEV
ROMANIA
BUCURESTI
SERBIA
BELGRADE
ALBANIA
TIRANA
GREECE
ATHENS
TURKEY
CONSTANTINOPLE
MONTENEGRO
SARAJEVO
BOSNIA
HERZEGOVINA
CROATIA
SLOVENIA
HUNGARY
VIENNA
AUSTRIA

map with XI). This was the eastern-most province, bordering on Russia. We continue now with the other provinces: Hungary, which, as I said, was in a certain way autonomous, then Kroatien (Croatia), Slavonien (Slavonia), Krain (Carniola), Steiermark (Styria). In the south there were more provinces: Kuestenland (Coastland), Dalmatien (Dalmatia), Bosnien (Bosnia), and Herzegowina.

We now go back to my hometown Czernowitz, which, as already told, was the capital of the province Bukowina. This was a relatively small province, bordering in the north on Galicia, in the east on Russia, in the south on Rumania and in the west on Hungary, where the border was formed by the Carpathian Mountains, from which many rivers came down, the Pruth, the Seret, and the Suczawa river, which joined the Danube river in Rumania. Czernowitz, lying on the river Pruth, was a beautiful city of about 130.000 inhabitants.

The population of the Bukowina was mixed. The capital was mostly German, but the rest consisted of Ukrainians, which were generally called Ruthenians, Poles, Hungarians, Rumanians, and quite a lot (about 35%) of Jews. The official language was German. It had a University and was the seat of a Greek-Oriental Archbishop, who resided in an architecturally beautiful palace, with an enormous, well-kept park. It had two railway stations and connecting the two stations was an electric streetcar, which ran through the center of the city.

The Bukowina was governed by a governor called "Stadthalter", who was nominated by and responsible to the emperor. Czerno-

witz and other big cities had a big Jewish population. Jews lived in that area already since the year 1400 and probably even earlier. They came there from the north and west, expelled from Germany, Poland and other countries. They had periods of relative peace, but often interrupted by periods of persecution. Often whole quarters where they lived were put on fire and they had to move to other areas. When Constantinople was taken by the Turks in 1458 it led to the incorporation of Moldovia and Walachia, of which the Bukowina was a part, into the Turkish Empire, and bad times started for the Jews. Things improved somewhat in the year 1775, when the Bukowina was given by the Turks to Austria as a gift after the Russian-Turkish war, in which Austria had supported the Turks. The Bukowina was attached to Galicia.

At that time, Maria Theresia was Empress of Austria, but there was still much suffering and persecution of the Jews. There was gradual improvement under her successors, Emperor Josef II, Leopold II, and Franz I and finally under Emperor Franz Josef I.

I know about the difficult and bad times the Jews had from history books. When I was young, I did not know anything about it. At that time Jews had already for many decades equal rights with others. There were Jews in important positions like judges, professors of the University, doctors etc., even mayors and some were even honored by becoming aristocrats with the title "Ritter von" like the Jewish Mayor of Czernowitz, who was Dr. Salo Ritter von Weisselberger, and there was also a physician, Dr. Ritter von Anhauch, whom I knew, by the way, personally. Some Jews were honored by getting the title "Baron," "Hofrat," "Kaiserlicher Rat," which

meant something like counselor to the emperor.

Many of the details of the history I know from a book, "The History of the Jews in Czernowitz." It tells in detail how the Jews came to that city as refugees, mostly from Poland and Russia, where there were often pogroms and only few could flee and save their lives. In Czernowitz itself there were also pogroms and the Jews had to leave. The Turks did something very special: They took Jewish children away from their parents and educated them in special institutions to become good Turkish soldiers called Janitschars. They took also children from other populations, not only from Jews. This little book, written in German, contains many pictures of buildings which I knew, and it should be preserved as a part of my biography. I will also prepare a very complete family tree which will help to trace the relationship of members of my family and Hedy's family, whose names will appear often in the following pages. Many of the people will be seen in the many photo albums (so far 7) so that the readers can see what they looked like at certain times.

CHAPTER 1

My Father's Death, My Birth

On March 14, 1987 the day that I was born, my mother was a widow.

My father had died eight days earlier and because I was born after his death I was given his name, "Adolf." Later I changed it to "Adolph."

However, I was generally called "Bubi.." My brother and his family still call me "Bubi" although after my marriage almost everyone called me "Adolph."

My father had had an accident. He was at that time thirty-eight years old. He was at a railway station in winter, where furniture was being loaded. He stepped on a rail covered with ice and fell hitting his head against the rail.. He did not tell my mother anything about what had happened to him. He only complained of headaches and he stayed at home for two days. My mother was pregnant at that time with me, and he probably did not want to upset her. There were two children already, my sister Else, born in 1893, and my brother Carl, born in 1895. My father's headaches increased and he still did not tell my mother anything about the accident.

Finally, he became confused, and an uncle of mine, Dr.

Isidore Drancz arrived from Czernowitz by train to examine him, but he was not able to make a definite diagnosis. He probably suspected a brain tumor. But when he asked my mother whether he had had an accident, she did not know anything about it and answered in the negative. My father could not answer

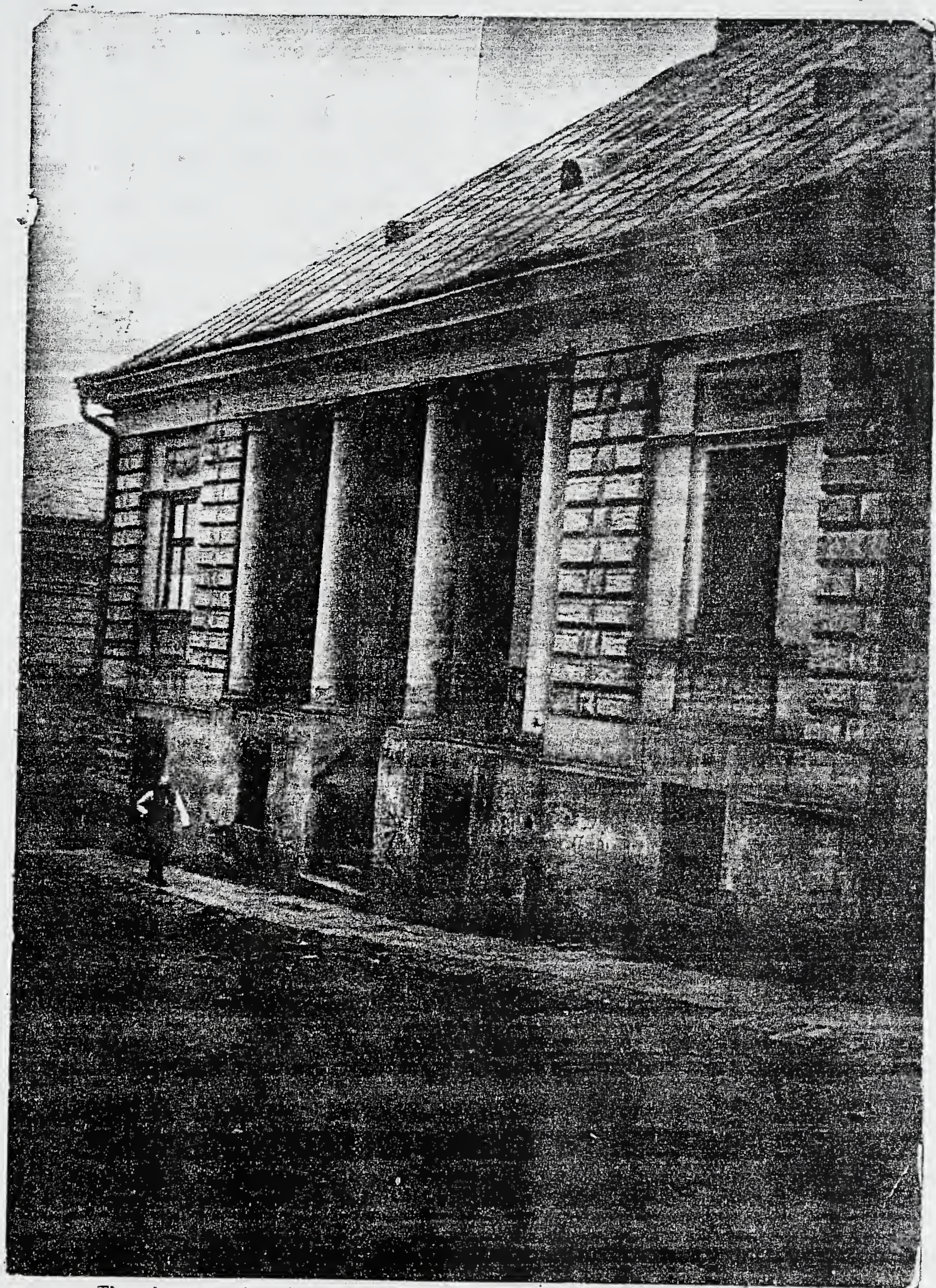
questions anymore at that time. My uncle went back home and came soon afterwards with a surgeon. I remember the name, Dr. Kwiatkowski, a very good surgeon in Czernowitz, and he also asked whether there was any accident, and since my mother didn't know anything, nothing could be done. My father became comatose and finally died on March 6th, 1897. I don't know exactly how long he was ill. I think about two months. I am not sure. When there was the funeral, a postman came with a registered letter at the moment, when the coffin was brought out of the house, and my mother was supposed to sign the receipt, but she asked my uncle, the doctor, to sign it for her. And there was now a letter from an insurance company from Vienna. My father had written to that insurance company about the accident, and now it was clear, that he must have had a fractured skull. It was probably only a small crack and a hematoma (accumulation of blood) inside the skull, a so-called subdural hematoma, which caused enormous pressure on the brain by increasing in size. Now they knew that he had had an accident.



CHAPTER 2

MY MOTHER, A WIDOW WITH 3 CHILDREN

My mother returned to the home of her parents in Czer-nowitz with her two children. She was only 25 years old, when she became a widow. I was born 8 days later, and I was later told that everybody was very unhappy that she had another child. But I was very cute, they said, and I was very well treated and everybody loved me. My mother got her own apartment in the house of my grandparents, in which we grew up and lived for many years.



The house in Czernowitz, where I was born and grew up

It was a beautiful house and I have a picture of it which shows only the front and it looks like a small house but it was in reality quite a big house. My grandparents lived on the upper floor on the right side, where there are two windows, one to the right, where there was the living room, and one between the 2 columns, where there was the bedroom. These 2 rooms were big rooms, and behind these rooms there were 2 more rooms, one bigger one, the dining room and another smaller room which we called salon, which had the windows to the yard. From the dining room, one had to walk 3 or 4 stairs up to a smaller room, and next to it was a large kitchen with a large closet. In the smaller room the salesman and the apprentices had their meals twice a day and where the maid slept at night, whereas the cook slept in the kitchen. This was the apartment of my grandparents. A similar apartment was on the left side of the house, except that it did not have the two last mentioned rooms, the smaller room and the kitchen. My mother and we 3 children got an apartment in the back, consisting of a kitchen and three rooms, with windows going to the yard. The apartment could be reached over a wooden gangway which we called "gang" which ran on three sides of the yard like a long balcony from which a staircase ran down to the yard. A plan, which I will draw, will explain the situation. We loved the house. It looked beautiful from the street and we also loved our apartment. The first room next to the kitchen was the bedroom for us 3 children, the next room was rather small and there stood the piano, and the third room was my mother's bedroom. To the left of our house there was a narrow street between our house, which had the No. 6 and the next house, which had the number 8, where there was ~~xx~~ the ~~xxxxxx~~ entrance to that house and to another house further in the back. It was a dead-end street, where there was at the end

a fence of a garden. There was plenty of room for us children to play, our yard and next to it the dead-end street, which we called "das Gasserl", which means little street. There was not only plenty of room to play, but there were also plenty of children. Below our apartment there lived a family with 5 children, and in the next house No.8 there lived a few families with many children. Altogether there were about 20 children, if not more, in these two houses, and plenty of noise. In our yard there was one very big acacia tree, which bloomed every year. Here I should mention that an organ-grinder came about once a week to play in our yard. He usually had a little monkey, a rhesus, sitting on top of his instrument on a long leash. We children used to stand around, and since the monkey was very friendly, we could take him in our arms or let him sit on our shoulders. We often had a few peanuts for him, and we gave the man, of course, a few hellers, which was then the money unit.

We were relatively well behaved children, and my mother was very strict with us, also our grandparents. Our evening meals we had together with the grandparents, and we had to sit quietly and did not talk, at least not loud. When the meal was over, my mother asked us to get up. Each of us went to the grandmother and kissed her hand, and we went with my mother to our apartment and to bed. But it was a rule that she played for us on the piano every evening, and we could ask her what to play. We liked for instance very much the Liszt "Hungarian Rhapsody No.2", which she played beautifully. We also liked the "Sonate pathétique" by Beethoven, "Fruehlingsrauschen" by Sinding, the "Ballade No.1" by Chopin, the "Rondo capriccioso" by Mendelssohn, and many other pieces, the names of which I don't remember anymore. She played till we

all were asleep.

When we went out with my mother, we wore sailor-blouses, which she had made herself, and sailor-caps, and short pants, which left the knees naked, even in winter. In winter, we went iceskating with her, every day. My mother was a good iceskater, a so-called figure-skater, and could also dance on the ice to the music. We boys were rather wild skaters, belonged to a group of boys, who played all kind of games on the ice, races, etc. I once broke my right ulna on the ice. Once I had a brain concussion and was carried unconscious into the clubhouse. But I regained consciousness very soon, and there were no after-effects. I was told that I was pushed down by two officers of the army, who were very wild skaters.. I was a little boy then and had gotten into their way. We had very cold winters, with temperatures of minus 30 or 35 degrees Celsius. Nevertheless, winter meant much fun for us children. We all had sleighs, of course. Horse-drawn sleighs were generally used for transportation. We did not ski, did not even hear about skis, when we were children. Our street, the Tuerkengasse, had an incline, and on some days great many children sleighed down all day long on their sleighs.

Our grammar school was at the corner of our street, and so we did not have to go far to school. Next to it was the girls school, where my sister Else went. I was a good pupil, but very shy, and my teachers liked me. I remember that on the first school day, my teacher, a Miss Schuster, took my face between her hands and said: "What eyes". She became a friend of my mother, and was often invited in the afternoon for coffee. I remember that I was once writing my home-work and Miss

Schuster was in for coffee. I did not know it and I asked my mother for help. I asked her loud: "Mama, how much is 4 and 4?" and she answered "8". Then I asked again: "How much is 3 and 4?" and now Miss Schuster answered and said: "Is that the way you do your home-work?" After that I did not ask anything anymore. My mother and Miss Schuster had a good laugh.

On Sundays, our grandfather took us often on trips. He ordered a coach with two horses, and we usually drove through the city to a place called "Die Buche" (the beechtree) near the second railway-station beyond the city. We went there, because there was a shady garden, where we could sit and get a glass of good buttermilk. Very often, he took us to the movies. There was a company, named Oeser, which had movie theatres in all bigger cities. It was, of course, a still-movie, and for the music there was a piano player. It was the time, before Asta Nielsen became famous, long before Charlie Chaplin.

I remember the day, when we could turn electric light on or off in our house. That was shortly after our grand mother had died, around the year 1906 or 1907. Up to that time, we had petroleum lamps in the house. That was a rather dim light and required daily cleaning of the glass cylinder, refilling of petroleum, and cutting carefully away the burnt rim of the wick. It was a wonderful thing to have all that changed, and to have brilliant electric light in every room, just by pushing or turning a switch. The telephone was also a great thing, but that came a little later, around 1910 or 1911. It was, of course, the old telephone, which can now be seen only in museums or antique shops, where one had to turn a crank, and then ask the operator to connect you with a certain number. A typewriter we also got

a little later, around 1911 or 1912.

I remember the time, when the first automobile came to the city. Later, when we heard an auto rattling, we all shouted "an auto, an auto" and ran into the street and we saw it passing by. There were autos later on, which had one wheel in the front and two wheels in the back.

I remember, when the first airplane came to our city. It was announced long before it came. We knew about Blériot, who was seen in other big cities. The man, who was to fly his plane in Czernowitz, was a Rumanian aviator, whose name was Vlaicu. Hundreds if not thousands of people went to a suburb, where there was a big flat field, to see him get into the air. He got up, but came down within a minute and landed in a potato field. The plane was not damaged, but a lot of soil went into the motor, and he could not fly anymore on that day, as the motor had to be cleaned. The next day, the show took place again, and this time it was a successful flight, and the plane circled a few times and landed well. That must have been in the year 1910 or 1911.

The playing in the street of us boys must have annoyed the people in our neighborhood. We liked to play croquet, but most of the time we played "cops and robbers" and ran wildly through the streets. We got into bad company, when a family Welt with 6 or 7 children moved into the house next door, and we learned bad things from them. My mother could not do much about it.

In the evening, before going to bed, we washed our hands and faces, and once a week we had a warm bath in the kitchen in a big round wooden tub. In those days, there were no bathrooms. In summer, a big group of boys bathed together in the Waschkueche (laundry) in a small building, which was attached

to the main building, with an entrance from the yard. There were two very big wooden round tubs for washing of the laundry, and there we all were bathing together. There was much fun and much noise. In later years, our grandfather used to take us to a Turkish bath, which we liked very much. It was also in the Tuerkengasse, not far from our house. By the way, there was a Tuerkenbrunnen (Turkish well) close by, with a wooden enclosure, looking like a little mosque, standing there since the time, when the Bukowina belonged to Turkey, which explains the name Tuerkengasse of the street.

Here I want to mention that as a young boy, when I was asked what I would like to be when I grow up, I always answered: A forester. I always regarded it as the most pleasant profession. Later I changed my mind and thought to be a teacher of zoology would be nice. But the decision to become a doctor came very late.

At the age of 10, after I had finished grammar school, I was invited by my uncle Martin, the pharmacist, and aunt Klara for two months to Stryj in Galicia. I made the trip by train all by myself. It was a ride of 6 or 7 hours. I had a wonderful time there. There was a family Lauterbach there, their best friends, and they had 5 or 6 children. The oldest was a daughter, about 18 years old, very beautiful, but also quite fat. The boys were all very nice and well behaved, and I learned from them many good things, most important catching, preserving, and collecting butterflies. They were good in that and I learned it really well, and since then this was my most important hobby.

After my return from the vacation, I entered the gymnasium.

It was the building which can be seen on the cover of the booklet "The history of the Jews in Czernowitz" to the right of the City Hall building. We started in the first grade with Latin, which I liked very much. But what I liked least was mathematics, and for that I have to blame the teacher, who was an old and very fat man, whose name was Epiphantias Ritter von Tarnowiecki. He proceeded fast and did not care whether the pupils understood what he taught or not. Without understanding the basics of mathematics, I never could catch up anymore. He also was teaching calligraphy, and that I liked very much, and I also liked geography. In the third year we started with Greek, which I also liked very much, and especially Homeros, which we started to read in the fourth year.

But what I liked most was Zoology. For this subject, we had a wonderful teacher, professor Mayer. He was an elderly man, tall, with a gray beard, and he made the subject very interesting. For each lesson he brought stuffed animals into the classroom. I was his favorite pupil and he selected me to help him carry the animals from his "cabinet" into the classroom. There was a big showcase in each classroom, and the animals were put there for weeks, and those which were there already a long time were taken out and back to his cabinet. We had started with mammals, and only the smaller ones, like martens, hedgehogs, etc., were left in the showcase. Later birds, reptiles, etc. were brought and put in the showcase. My interest in natural history had started early in my life, became later love of nature and love of life.

I want to come back here to my main hobby of collecting

butterflies. For a few years, my interest in them was very intense. That meant going on excursions to the suburbs of Czernowitz and also to places which were farer away. The Weinberg was near and really only a wooded hill, but other places required excursions for a whole day, like Horecza and the Cecina, which was a mountain, two hours by foot from home. My collection of day butterflies grew nicely, and I had almost all the specimens of our area, mounted under glass. But with night butterflies, which are here called moths, it was a different story. This required going out at night, and it was the Volksgarten, a large beautiful park, where we went almost every evening, usually my brother Carl and I, equipped with nets on long sticks and with boxes. There we always met other boys, of about our age, who were also crazy about butterflies, two brothers Brettschneider and a few others. The main alley had good lamps, about 20 yards apart, which attracted many moths. In the evening, there were many people sitting on benches, but the number of people decreased, as the clock advanced. The moths were circling the lamps, till they finally touched them, and since they were hot, their antennae got burned, and they lost there equilibrium, coming down in narrow circles, and becoming our victims. At about 11 o'clock we boys were the only people in the park, and at about that time the lights were turned off, and we had to go home. We had a wonderful time, catching often large specimens of moths, some rare ones also. We knew the names of all of them. The main work started then at home, when we had to mount all the moths on mounting boards. That took another one to two hours, and left us little time to sleep, and our poor mother ^{had} a difficult time in the morning to wake us up for school. It was all right during vacation time or on weekends, but otherwise it was not so good, as I was often sleepy in school

and sometimes even dozed off. But my interest in butterflies abated later on, when other interests developed.

CHAPTER 3

OUR STEPFATHER

One day, it was in winter and we were ice-skating, my mother introduced me to a gentleman with a mustache and beard. I saw her later almost every evening iceskating with him. He was a good skater and she also danced with him on the ice to the music. That was around the year 1908. His name was Heinrich Brunwasser, and soon he also came to our house, and it^{did} not take long and they got married. That was on December 27th, 1908. After the wedding, my mother and my stepfather had their bedroom in the small apartment where once our great-grandmother had lived, and we children stayed for the nights with our grandfather.

My stepfather was a student of jurisprudence at the University of Czernowitz, but he gave it up and entered the business of my grandfather. He was born in the year 1876, was therefore 32 years old at the time of the wedding, four years younger than my mother, who was 36. His father's name was Wilhelm. He had a big restaurant in the biggest hotel in the center of the city, the Hotel zum Schwarzen Adler (black eagle). His mother's name was Rosa. They had four children, besides my stepfather one brother Ignaz, who had changed his name to Brunert, and was married and lived with his family in Vienna, one sister Marie, who was married to a Mr. Geber and lived in Czernowitz, and another sister Regine, who was not married at that time. 1 or 2 years later she married a Mr. Liebermann and moved to Drohobycz in Galicia. They all were very nice people and there soon developed a very friendly family-relationship with our family. My stepfather had entered, as I said, the business of my grandfather, but shortly afterwards my grandfather got sick. He developed a pain in his lower back, and soon also a weakness in

both legs. The doctors, whom he had consulted, told him that it was arthritis, but they probably knew what it really was. He could not attend to his business any more, and was most of the time in bed. In the bedroom, they put up a kind of steamer, where he sat inside a round canvas chamber, where steam came in from a kettle, that was outside, and he had to sweat for about an hour. I know now, though I never heard anybody say it, that he had cancer of the prostate with metastazation in the vertebral column. He became very weak. My mother had taken care of my grandmother, who was sick for years with leukemia, and here she had exactly the same hard work for a year or two with my grandfather, whom she nursed with great care. One evening, we children were called to his bedside, and one by one, we went to him and kissed his hand. He was fully conscious. The next morning, he was dead. That was on June 14, 1910. There was an enormous funeral, and hundreds of people followed his coffin to the cemetery. There were 22 "Partezettel" (printed obituary announcements) with a black edge, from different organizations, to which he had belonged, pasted on the wall of the staircase going down to the street, when the coffin was brought down. They were also pasted on different places all over town.

My grandfather's estate was divided into 4 parts. The store in the center of the city was sold. My mother kept the house in the Tuerkengasse, and my stepfather kept only the mineral water business, which he built up into a very big business. My uncle Martin Sobel, the pharmacist, became a partner of that business, and my stepfather had to pay him out a certain part of his income for a long time.

We all moved now into the apartment of my grandfather.

My stepfather managed the whole business from an office in our house, the same room where my great-grandmother had lived. He had a young lady as secretary and he had bought a typewriter, on which I also learned how to type, with 2 fingers only, and that I am still doing up to the present time. My stepfather was very nice to me right from the beginning. He was very good-natured, a kind of man who could be called "jovial". I remember that at the time shortly after they got married, he used to sing to the accompaniment of my mother at the piano a song, which started with the line: "Oh du heiss, oh du heiss, oh du heiss geliebte Maid", translated into English: "Oh you hot, oh you hot, oh you hotly loved maiden", and which ended with the line: "du heisse, heisse, heisse, heisse, heiss-geliebt Maid", in English: "you hotly, hotly, hotly, hotly, hotly loved maiden". He also liked to recite poems of a funny type, and I still have a few of them. I later found out that he also had belonged to the same amateur theatre club of which I had become a member later, and that he had participated as an actor in plays, which were performed on the stage. He was very good to my mother and tried to please her as much as he could. And that was perhaps also the reason that he was very good to me and supported me after the war, so that I could study medicine in Vienna with a sufficient amount of money. Another cause may have been that I loved very much little Walter, who was an adorable child and that I devoted much of my time to him. My stepfather, whom I always called Uncle Heinrich, was in general a quiet man. When we were sitting together at meals, he hardly said a word. That was his nature. When we had company, he took part in conversations, but never got excited about the

subjects that were discussed. But I have to say that I did not know him well, since I was a little over 11 years old, when he came into our family, and we were together then only up to the year 1914, when the First World War broke out, when we all left Czernowitz, when I was just 17 years old. I then saw him again after the war at the end of 1918, only for one year, because the next year I left for Vienna to study medicine.

Now a few words about his relatives. His father, Wilhelm Brunwasser, was also generally a very quiet and very corpulent man. He owned a big restaurant in the center of the city. He suffered from severe diabetes, and had, late in life, one leg amputated. I saw him a few times, after the war, walking with crutches. His wife Rosa was very good-natured and I know that my mother liked her very much. She was for some reason for many months in a hospital, and my mother visited her there every single day. They probably did not leave, like great many other people, during the war, stayed on during the grim time of Russian occupation. My stepfather's sister, Marie Geber, and her husband and son Hugo probably left Czernowitz and lived as refugees in Vienna. I remember to have seen Hugo once in Vienna, a good-looking young man. From Regina, another sister of my stepfather, who had married a Mr. Liebermann in Drohobycz in Galicia, I never heard again. But the brother of my stepfather, Ignaz Brunert, was well known to me, and he and his family were my patients in Vienna and became our best friends. He had married into a fine family, Hofrath Schlag. I had met the old man with his little white beard, who had one eye only or, better said, had lost one eye for some reason, only once in 1915. After the war, when I opened my

office, they became my patients and our relations became very intimate. I loved Ignaz, who was in many respects similar to my stepfather, but in contrast to him much more talkative and almost constantly inclined to humor. The old lady, Mrs. Rosa Schlag, was the center of the family, adored and respected by all the members of the family. She consulted me as a patient quite frequently. One of her children, Else, was the wife of Ignaz Brunert, a fine lady, heading a fine household. They had two children, Ernst and Edith. Ernst had left as a refugee for England, where he had married and has two children. Edith, whom I knew as a little girl, married after her emigration a boyfriend, a very nice young man, Charles Gardner, who was born in Germany. Edith, a most lovely, beautiful lady, and Charles live in Scranton in Pennsylvania, have two sons, Stephen now also married and the father of two little children, and John, a handsome young man. We are in frequent contact with them, had visited them a few times over the years in Scranton and later in Clarks Green near Scranton. About more details, and the other members of the family, Edith and/or Charles will perhaps want to write themselves more, adding to the biography.

One day, when I came home from school, on June 13th, 1910, I heard a baby cry and I was told that my mother had given birth to a boy. I was very surprised. What was most funny about it, was, that I had not noticed anything before that my mother was pregnant. So, I had a half-brother, Walter Brunwasser.

CHAPTER 4

MY SISTER ELSE, AN ARTIST - MY BROTHER CARL, AN ACTOR

At about the year 1908, shortly before my stepfather came into our family, my sister^{Else} was taken out of school. She was then in the 4th or 5th grade of lyceum. She had shown such an enormous talent for drawing and painting that everybody, including her teachers, said that it would be a great thing, if she would get into an art school. There was no such school, at least not a good one, in Czernowitz. My mother followed everybody's advice, and got in touch with our aunt Rosa in Berlin, who was very happy to take her into her house. My sister was then almost 16 years old. Off she went to Berlin, and she was put into a fine art school. My aunt had three children. The oldest was a girl, Alice, about two years younger than my sister, and two boys; Herbert and Felix, 2 resp. 4 years younger than their sister. My sister stayed two years in Berlin. After the first year, my aunt, cousin Alice, and my sister went for a few weeks for vacation to the Baltic sea, to a very popular place, Misdroy on the island Wollin, to the North of Steettin. They had a great time there. When she came home after two years, it was astonishing, how much she had progressed in drawing and painting, as she had brought with her sketch books and a great number of drawings and paintings. Wherever she had gone in Berlin, she made sketches, especially of people in the subway. She had a firm hand and what she did, came out perfect. She had also learnt anatomy, and her drawings of persons, naked or not, were excellent, especially regarding proportion. She had also brought with her an

enormous number of books, which she had read, works of the great philosophers Kant, Schopenhauer, Hegel, Nietzsche, Ernst Haeckel, Otto Weininger, Kierkegaard, etc. I remember that she also brought the memoirs of Maria Baskirtschew. She could talk about philosophy like a grown-up person and she was then only 18 years old. She was simply amazing. She also brought a big collection of postcards of famous singers and actors, whom she had seen in theatres in Berlin. I remember that great many were portraits of the opera singer Geraldine Farrar, who was extremely beautiful and whom she adored, also pictures of Saharet, who was a famous dancer from Spain, also Otero, and Cleo de Merode. These are the names I remember. The last one was, I think, a dancer and became famous as the mistress of King Leopold II. of Belgium and the cause of great scandals.

Else was very pretty.^(see pict. p 10) She played on the piano beautifully, especially classical music. She used to sing to her own accompaniment, and she had a beautiful voice. She also liked to play tennis. She was away in Berlin, when my mother and my stepfather got married. I and my brother Carl were told to call our stepfather "uncle" or "uncle Heinrich", since we found it difficult to call him "Papa" or "Father". That we did. But Else did not like to do that, and for some unexplicable reason she did not like him right from the beginning and never spoke to him. This caused a very unpleasant situation. She did not greet him, when he came home. When he came home and I and Else were in the room, I said "good evening" and so did he, but she did not open her mouth. This situation did not last long anyway. At about that time, it was the year 1910, my brother Carl had difficulties in the school. He wanted to become an actor and did not want to study. Since he had a beautiful tenor voice, he wanted to become an operetta tenor. And

Else wanted to continue her art education. But she could not go to Berlin anymore. There a great change had taken place. Immediately after my grandfather had died, our aunt Rosa got a divorce from her husband Ignaz Siódmak, and moved to Vienna, and soon married a Mr. Emmerich Hartmann. She had had him as a lover for many years. She knew him already, when she was a young girl. He was then an officer in the Austrian army, a lieutenant. She would have liked to marry him then, but he was a Christian, and therefore she could not do it on account of her parents. So, she married that man, Ignaz Siódmak and moved to Berlin. My aunt had met her lover often. Either he came to Berlin or she came to Vienna.

Mr. Hartmann was a wonderful man, tall and handsome, and a man of great knowledge. He was studying all the time, while in the army. He could speak and write 20 languages. On account of that, as a captain, he got a position in the State Department in Vienna, where he had to translate important documents from foreign countries, telegrams, newspaper articles, etc. But there was something very wrong with him. As a young officer he had contracted syphilis. He was treated then with Salvarsan or Neo-Salvarsan, which Paul Ehrlich had invented a few years earlier. It was a great medicine, and great many people were cured with it. But some not, especially when the treatment was not started right in the beginning. In the case of Mr. Hartmann it was either too late or the dosis was insufficient. Shortly after my aunt had moved with her three children to Vienna and had married him, he suddenly got completely blind, due to atrophy of the optic nerves of both eyes. Nothing could be done. Then all the symptoms of a terrible disease, tabes dorsalis, set in, gradually, the typical gait, severe lancinating pains, then sensory disturbances in the hands, paralysis of the muscle of the

anus, etc. It was a real catastrophe. That Alice, the older child of aunt Rosa, was the daughter of Mr. Siodmak, was sure, but it was more than an assumption that the two boys, Herbert and Felix, were the sons of Mr. Hartmann and that they had inherited the syphilis. Both were mentally slightly retarded, and Herbert was an epileptic, and both were homosexuals. Herbert died at the age of about 22 in an epileptic attack.

To come back to my sister Else and my brother Carl: It was decided to send them both to Vienna. Else attended a very fine art school, and Carl a theatre school, which was in the same building as the "Theatre an der Wien". He studied there under professor Gothow-Gruenecke and also in the "Academy für Music und darstellende Kunst" under professor Forstén. He took a final examination there on November 18, 1915 during the war, and received a diploma. They lived together in the 8th district at Laudongasse 50, not far from the Schloesselgasse, where our aunt Rosa and her family lived. They both made good progress in their respective schools. They were supported by our mother and stepfather. My mother used to send them quite regularly packages with all kinds of food stuff. After about two years, they both came home to Czernowitz. Else brought many beautiful drawings and paintings and an enormous number of so-called act-drawings of nude models.

CHAPTER 5

1910 - 1914

In the meantime, I had progressed well in school. I liked very much Latin and Greek, but I was most interested in zoology. To the hobby of collecting butterflies and other insects had come other hobbies, collecting minerals, stamps, and photography. I had started with photography very early, when I was about 11 or 12 years old. I had a very primitive camera with a wooden tripod, a box with a lense with a fixed focus 8. In the back was an opales-

cent glass in a slot, which could be taken out, and into which a cassette could be slid in, which contained two glass negatives. The distance between lens and glass negative could not be changed. To take a picture, I had to cover the lens with a cap. The exposure took about 10 seconds. I removed the cap from the lens and counted slowly till 10. During that time the person, whose picture I took, had to sit absolutely quiet and not to blink, otherwise I had to repeat the process. I developed the negative in our cellar. Prints I made by using a paper, which was not very light-sensitive, in exposing it to daylight in a frame for quite a long time, and developing it then in a similar way I developed the glass film. It was a rather simple method, and the results were often amazingly good. I photographed most of the time Walter, who was a really lovely and charming child. Unfortunately, all of these pictures were lost during the First World War.

I had my own room in our house, which was like a museum. I had found a man who was a professional taxidermist, and I was sitting often for hours in his house, watching how he stuffed all kinds of animals, mostly birds, also heads of deers, which he mounted on boards to be hung on the wall. He was an excellent expert and did everything with great skill. I bought often birds from him, which he could sell only if they were left and not claimed for one or two years. I had in my room a buzzard, a bird of pray, a little smaller than an eagle, a big owl, a falcon, a giant crow (in Latin *corvus corax*), which became later almost extinct in all of Europe, many other birds like the blue jay, also a white baby rabbit, also a skeleton of a cat, and great many smaller birds. All that in my relatively small room, and, of course, many showcases with

butterflies, also other insects. I had a rifle and went often on excursions and shot small birds, which my man then stuffed for me. Some big birds I also hung on the walls in other rooms.

Very often I went on bigger excursions with other boys, after we had formed a club. Once I went with a friend on an excursion for about two weeks. His name was Horowitz and he later became a doctor too. We went on foot to the North to the border of Galicia to a bigger city, Wyznitz, where the Czeremosz river joined the Pruth river, crossed over a bridge to Kutu in Galicia, and then walked along the Czeremosz river. There the Carpathian mountains started, beautiful woods. I remember some names of villages, which we had passed: Rostoki, Hryniawa, Holoszyna, and Jalowiczora. We used to stay over night in peasants houses. We had very little money, but we did not have to pay anything for staying over night, and we ate very little. We had planned to walk to Körösmező, a pass on the Hungarian border. But my friend found Hryniawa very nice, and did not want to go any further. So, we broke up, and I continued alone. I knew later that he was right and I very wrong. I went alone deeper and deeper into the mountains. In Jalowiczora, I had to stay over night, since it started to get dark. I happened to come into a Jewish home. The family had just supper, and I was asked to join them at the table. It was my first good meal after a long time. These were extremely nice people. For the night, they gave me a fine clean bed with a down blanket. In the morning, I got a good breakfast. I asked them, what I owed them, but they would not accept any money. There was a very high mountain in that area, the Maximec, and I told them that I would like to go up there. There happened to come a man along, who knew the way and had to go up to an alpine farm there. So, I joined him, and it took a long

time and much walking and climbing, till we reached the top. There were great many cows grazing there. I had thought that this man would go down with me also, but no, he had to stay there. Now I was in a dilemma, since I did not know the way. I was worried that I could be ~~could be~~ attacked by a bear on my way, when I walked alone. But there was no way out, and I had to go alone. This man showed me only the direction with the hand and that was all. When I reached the tree area, I soon felt myself lost and did not know where to go. I came to a little brook and ^{had} to follow it, but was not sure where it would lead me. I had to jump in the brook from one stone to the next one, for long stretches. Then there were grassy lanes, where I could walk next to the brook. After hours, I finally came into the valley, and yes, it was the Czeremosz river. I stayed again in the house of a peasant, slept on straw, next to the stable. Early in the morning, without anything in my stomach, I went to the river. There were big floats passing by. I had seen them often before, but I never was on one. I decided to take a journey on such a float. I went to a big rock, which was a little more protruding over the edge of the river and gave signs to an oncoming float. The man in front brought the float really close to the rock, on which I was standing, and I could make a jump and landed well on the float. It was an enormous float, consisting of three floats which were tied together. The second man on that float rammed a piece of wood vertically into one of the big logs, so that I had something to hold on to. It was a terrible journey. The two men had spikes on their shoes, and could relatively easily walk over the logs, but I had regular shoes and since the logs got wet all the time, I had to be careful not to slip. The men warned me not to get a foot between the

logs, since I could easily lose it. The logs were about 15 yards long and tied together at the ends, about 15 or 20 logs next to each other, and behind the first float, tied to it, was the second, and behind that one the third float. The man in front had a long rudder in the water, tied to the center of the float on a vertical piece of wood, so that he could move it to the right or to the left, wherever it was necessary to steer it. He had to keep in the middle of the river and to avoid big rocks, which were in the river. The second man was in the back of the third float, and had a similar rudder to handle, and had to keep the float in line with the other two floats. I was wet up to the waist all the time from the splashing water. Especially in the beginning, when the river was not very wide, and very rough, there were dangerous spots, where the float had to pass over rocks, and the logs were spreading apart and going deeper into the water. These were terrible moments. But later, when the river got wider, the ride was smoother and less dangerous. It was late in the afternoon, and it started to get dark, when the float came to the city of Wiznitz, where there were great many floats, and finally came to a halt. Walking and jumping over many floats, which were there, I finally could reach firm ground under my feet. I had not had anything in my mouth all day, not even a drink of water. I found a little hotel in the city and fell into the bed. I had to pay the next day two crowns, and that was almost the end of my capital. There was a bus going to the town of Berhomet, which was, as I knew, in the Seret valley, and not very far was the city of Storozynetz, where my uncle, Dr. Isidor Drancz and his family lived. I took that bus to Berhomet, and there, with my last money, the bus to Storozynetz. They were glad to see me, and there were aunt Gusta, my cousin Isa-

bella, of the same age as I, whom I had always loved very much, and my cousin Egon, who worked as a dentist in my uncle's office. He had a congenital heart disease, and later a so-called cor bovinum, which means an enormously enlarged heart, and he died at a relatively young age. I remember that my aunt had found in my back pack a ~~hard~~-boiled egg, which was smelling terribly. It was part of the food which my mother had given me when I had started my excursion. It was, in spite of all the hardships, a beautiful experience.

I did not mention yet that Czernowitz also had a beautiful theatre, the "Stadttheater", which had been built around the year 1900 and was almost a replica of the "Deutsches Volkstheater" in Vienna, built by the same architect. All types of plays were offered: Operas, operettas, dramas, classical as well as modern, comedies. A large ensemble of singers and actors was brought every year from big reservoirs of Germany and Austria, and great works of art were performed. The repertoire was enormous and diversified, greatly satisfying an always enthusiastic audience, which filled the house to capacity. Not all of them, but great many were excellent actors and singers. There were no limits in the repertoire: Operas by Meyerbeer, Donizetti, Halevy, Rossini, Wagner, Verdi, Puccini, Weber, Leoncavallo's *Il Pagliaccio*, Mascagni's *Cavalleria Rusticana*, always played together, Bizet's *Carmen*, etc., of course not all played in one season, but over the years. We saw great many classical works, by Shakespeare, and many of the great German playwrights, and also modern ones and many comedies. A big role played the operettas, which were very popular, from Jaques Offenbach and Johann Strauss down to Milloecker, Leo Fall, Franz Lehar, Oscar Strauss, and you could hear always people in the

street singing or whistling melodies of these operettas.

The first play I saw in that theatre at the age of about 13 years was Hamlet and I felt very bad that I could not see from my seat in a box - we called it "Loge" - in the uppermost circle the ghost of Hamlet's father, and only hear it. The first opera I heard was the Flying Dutchman by Richard Wagner. Later, I became a theatre fanatic and hardly missed any performance. I played many melodies of the operas and operettas on the piano, in my way and mostly from memory.

Here I should also mention that Czernowitz had also a concert hall, called the "Musikvereinsgebäude, and a music conservatory. Many great pianists, violinists, and singers came to give concerts. I remember to have heard among others: Rachmaninoff, Arthur Schnabel, Artur Rubinstein, Jan Paderewski, Wilhelm Backhaus, Fritz Kreisler, and the great Belgian violinist Ysaÿe. In later years I hardly missed any of the concerts of the great artists, who came to our town. I should mention here that the old theatre, abandoned, after the new one was built, was still standing, just diagonally across our home in the Tuerkengasse. There was a large empty area in front of that building, which we children used as a playground. The abandoned theatre had still the rows of seats, mostly broken and vandalized, and the stage. In the back of the building lived a mister Falikmann with his family and he was supposed to keep order in the old house. But we children were allowed to go in and to play there. There was still the swan, which was once used for performances of Lohengrin, there were all kinds of spears and swords, great many stage-wings etc., everything dusty and in bad condition.

Czernowitz can be called a provincial town, but it was not

a backward town , since it had a high percentage of "intelligentsia". It was a clean town. The schools were very good, and what we learned in the gymnasium was the same that was learned in the other cities in the West, in Vienna and other big cities. Greek is not being taught in the United States in high schools, and Latin only for one or two years. These are important languages for general education. We learned Latin for 8 years and Greek for 6 years. German literature played the most important role in our education. All the great classics from Goethe and Schiller down were studied, and it would not make any sense to name them all. Their names are not known here anyway, except by people, who make a special effort to study German in college and at the University. Heinrich Heine is generally quite well known, but names like Lessing, Wieland, Koerner, Rueckert, Hebbel, Chamisso, Lenau, Scheffel, to name just a few, are more or less unknown, but played an important part in German countries and in our lives. We read their works in school, either plays or poems or novels quite in detail, had to know many poems by heart, recite them, and saw many of their plays in the theatre. Some of the modern German authors like Thomas Mann or Gerhart Hauptmann are quite well-known here. I have mentioned all that to show that we had received a well rounded education in our schools.

You hear so often people say that Latin and Greek are dead languages, and that it is wasted time to learn that in school. That is so wrong. We did not learn it to speak these languages. We learned it in order to be able to read and translate important works, written by great Greek and Roman writers, and to learn ancient history and philosophy. This is of enormous importance. Is it not important to know about Greek mythology, to know the details of the Trojan war? That is why we read Homeros' "Iliad"

and the "Odyssee", and some of the tragedies of the great writers Euripides, Aeschylos, and Sophokles, which enriched enormously our young lives. We learned thus about Oedipos, Elektra, Iphigenia, Theseus, Herakles, Perikles, Demosthenes, Pythagoras, Solon, Plato, Sokrates, Archimedes, Aristoteles, Alexander the Great, etc. The list could be continued, but I better stop. These were important people and that is why we learned Greek, to learn the details about them.

And the same applies to Latin. We learned history, spanning more than 1000 years, from the foundation of Rome to the middle of the first millenium, about the expansion of the Roman empire, the great men, who became leaders, Julius Caesar, Pompeius, Augustus, Nero, Titus, Constantin the Great, etc. I only mentioned a few names, the list is almost endless. I should mention a few great Roman writers, Livius, Virgil, Cicero, Sallust, Seneca, from whom we learned so much about Roman history, the expansion and the fall of the Roman empire. That is why we learned Latin. Not to speak it fluently in conversation, but solely to learn history and philosophy as a foundation of our modern world. There is so much more that we did not learn, and which had to be left for later times. There was so much more going on for thousands of years in other parts of the world in China, India, Africa, and America. But with Greek and Latin we learned a lot, and that is what I wanted to say.

I want to describe here many other activities in which I engaged during my adolescent years. There was, for instance football, what we call here soccer. There were many football clubs in Czernowitz, but it was quite difficult to get admitted into one, as it required intensive training. So, I and a number of colleagues of mine decided to form our own football club. We called it

"Holland Club". Why just Holland, I could not explain when asked. So, we went out on the Horecza meadow, where all the other clubs played, and started training. But since the other clubs, which were already in existence, declined to play against us, as we did not belong to any "league", we formed ourselves teams and played against each other. This lasted for a while, but not for long. The whole thing soon fell asleep, and other things became more important.

I also liked to play billard. It was a different kind of billard than the one usually played here. Here the table has 6 holes, into which the ball fell in, and it is being played with a great number of balls. We played on a plain table without any holes, and only with 3 balls. The ball, which one hit, had to hit the other two balls, and you continued as long as you hit the other two balls. Only when you missed the second ball, the other player took over. Each successful hit was being counted. The game was called "Carambole". I brought it to some mastery in billard. But it required going late in the evening to a coffeehouse, which had a billard room, and that was not so good. There was one young man, who asked me almost every evening to go with him and play billard. That meant often playing for hours and going late to bed. My mother did not like it, but could not do much about it. That was in the years 1913 and 1914.

In these years, I was also involved in training for saber duelling. There were student organizations at all major Universities, grouped with regard to different nationalities, and also religions. The students wore caps in different colors, also bands diagonally across the chest in different colors. There

were German clubs, and one of their clubs was the "Teutonia", another one the "Franconia". There were Polish, Ukrainian, Rumanian, and Jewish clubs. One Jewish club was the "Hebronia", others had the names "Zephira", "Maccabea", "Hasmonea". They were promenading on Sundays in the center of the city, on the Ringplatz and in the Herrengasse. Very often conflicts arose, which led to duels between students of different clubs. At the duels sabers with sharp edges were used. Each duellist had one man at his side, a secundant, who protected him with a saber from dangerous hits. The fighting was with bare chests, but the neck was protected with a heavy bandage up to the chin. The duel came to an end when one of the duellists was injured. There was always a doctor present. It was usually a cut on the face. In those days, people who had scars on their face used to be proud, since they had the proof that they were courageous and had risked an injury. Some people had many such scars on their face. These student clubs had so-called pro-fuchsias, which meant clubs of students in the last years of the gymnasium, before they entered the University. I belonged to such a pro-fuchsia. There lived in our house a student, who belonged to a Ukrainian student club, called "Zaporozhe". In spite of the fact that I was Jewish, he took me in into the pro-fuchsia of his club, and I underwent a rigorous training in duelling. It required holding the saber high up for up to half an hour and longer, and hitting the opponent, protected by a so-called "Stierkopf" (bull head), which was a kind of helmet, sitting on the shoulders, preventing any injuries. These young people in the profuchsias were also admitted to student's beer evenings, which meant drinking enormous amounts of beer and singing student songs, and also meant coming home totally

drunk. I participated quite often, and remember it with horror.

Some evenings, we went out for serenades. It meant going late in the evening to a window and sometimes into hallways of houses to sing beautiful songs, to please one of the participants, who had somewhere a girl, for whom we serenaded. It usually ended with the girl and her mother appearing in the door or at a window and thanking for the serenade. They did it also a few times for a girl, whom I knew or "liked".

It is time that I also say something about my musical education. As a young boy of 8 or 9, I had as a teacher an old lady, miss Tomowicz, who came twice a week to our house. She was quite good and I progressed nicely. I practiced much and advanced from Clementi and Czerny to Kuhlau, Diabelli, and Mozart. I had her as a teacher for about 3 or 4 years. I liked the piano, and learned many things myself. After a pause, when I had no teacher, I decided to start again with a fine teacher at the conservatory. But I got only 15 minutes or perhaps half an hour once a week with that teacher, who was a great pianist, and often was accompanist of great violinists or cellists, who came to our town for concerts. He was very strict and you had to practice and prepare yourself well before each lesson. I had him as a teacher for only one year or perhaps a year and a half, till the First World War broke out in 1914. I had come quite far by then, could play Strauss waltzes and some Chopin mazurkas, lighter pieces by Mozart and Beethoven, and I learnt myself operetta music by heart, which was very popular then, the "Marry Widow", "Rastelbinder", "Dream Waltz" etc. and some opera arias. I often played for young people, who were dancing. That was always my job, and it meant often sitting for hours and playing for them waltzes,

polkas, mazurkas, gavottes, fox trots, and tangos.

Till now, I had mentioned many hobbies and activities during my younger years. Now, as I advanced in years and became an adolescent of 16 or 17 years, my interests had changed, though some of the earlier ones remained. I became now interested in theatre playing, and I joined a group of other young people, who had the same interests. We formed a dilettant club, or, as we would say here, an amateur club. We had, as I mentioned before already, a good theatre in Czernowitz, but it was closed during the summer months, and that gave us a chance to play in that theatre, also in other smaller towns. Preparations required much work. We gathered for rehearsals usually twice a week in the evening, and it took many months, till we finally came out on the stage. I still have printed theatre programs, which show that we played for instance on the 18th of August, 1913 a play: "Staatsanwalt Alexander" (district attorney Alexander), a tragedy in four acts by Karl Schueler. I played the title role. By the way, the 18th of August was the birthday of our emperor Franz Josef I., a big holiday in those days. As a young fellow of 16 years, I had to use much restraint to play the part of a district attorney who had a grown-up son. But I was told that my performance was very good, and that encouraged me. In the same year we came out with two more plays: "Hinter Mauern" (behind walls), by a Danish playwright Henry Nathanson, which we played in a small town, Novosielitza, near the Russian border. The reason that we played it there was that some of my gymnasium colleagues came from that town, and one of them, Bruno Beron, played an important part in it.

Something very funny happened during the performance, which

was given in a large hall, filled to capacity, so that the first row of seats was close to the stage. Many difficulties arose during the performance, but the audience showed much understanding and accepted everything as it was. I had two roles in that play: In the first, second and fourth act, I played the role of a doctor, and had a small black mustache. But in the third act, I played the role of an elderly man with large gray sideburns. My mustache in the first two acts was well pasted on with a kind of rubbery glue. But after the second act, I had to remove it, and that could only be done with vaseline. After the third act, I had to remove my sideburns, and put the black mustache back on, since I was now again the young doctor. But unfortunately, I had not removed thoroughly the vaseline from the left side of my upper lip. Therefore, the glue did not stick well, and while I was on the stage, the mustache from the left side fell off. I noticed it right away and decided to leave things as they were, but to show the audience only the right side of my face, and not to turn my head. That would have been perfect, especially since the play was very close to the end. But I had to have a conversation with my younger brother in that play, a part, which was played by my friend Bruno Beron, whom I mentioned before. I looked straight at him, and when he saw that I had only half a mustache, he pulled it off. The audience saw it and roared. I have laughed about it for years, whenever I thought about it, and also now, while I am writing that down, I have to laugh and my eyes are full of tears.

I remember that the next day we made an excursion across the Russian border into Russian Novosielitza with border

passes, which we had received. It was more or less a Jewish town, and made the impression of a completely different world.

The third play, which we produced in that year, was "Der Strom" (the stream) by Max Halbe, a tragedy in three acts. We played it in the city Storozynetz, where my uncle and aunt Dr. Drancz lived with their family. I had to go there a few days earlier, since I had to build the stage on a podium, the wings with doors and windows, install the lights, the curtain etc. All that I had to do myself. But it was a good performance and a great success. These were three plays in the year 1913, and for the time being the end of my "career" as an actor, because the next year the First World War began. But I came back alive from the war, and in the year 1919, our club, and with many good actors, became active again. Later more about that.

So far, I have described about all my activities and hobbies of my younger years, but the picture would be incomplete, if I would not describe a little more in detail my teachers in school. Some of them were excellent teachers, real experts in their fields. We had in our school a teacher, Dr. Artimowicz, who had once received a ring with a brilliant from emperor Franz Josef I. for outstanding work. For Latin, we had a teacher, Dr. Tumlirz, who had written a textbook, which was used in many schools as a textbook. And for Greek we had a professor Wurzer. He was a heavy built man with a big belly, and the students used to say that he was a drinker. But that was probably not true, and we always saw him alert in school. I remember, when he once described Sokrates and told us that he was condemned to die, and that he took the cup with the poison to his lips and drank the poison, he really cried, and tears came down his cheeks. The

students made often fun of him, and that induced me to do it too. He wore always eyeglasses, and had them always near the tip of his nose. I once brought a pair of eyeglasses to school, and put them on, the same way he wore them. He looked at me for a moment, but did not say anything. He generally ignored these things, and this way maintained discipline in his class. But I was always for fun, and often played the clown in the class, imitating the way some professors behaved or talked. We had for instance for history a professor Barlion, who could not say well the letter "S". It always sounded more like a "T". Instead of "setzen Sie sich", which means "sit down", he said "Teten te tich". But he was a good-natured man, and did not get angry, when I spoke to him in a similar way. I did not have great difficulties with him, probably because he knew that I liked history very much.

One of my favored subjects was the German language. We often had to write essays, either in the classroom or as home work. Great poems were analyzed in detail, and we had to learn them, so that we could recite them by heart. I still remember a few poems and can recite them, for instance "The sorcerers apprentice", "The God and the Bajadere", "The singer", all three by Goethe. We had a professor, whom we all loved. We often begged him till he complied to read for us poems by Nikolaus Lenau, which he did in a wonderful way.

Once I had the special task of writing an essay about the theatre in old Greece, how they played at that time, around 400 B.C. in the open air in a kind of amphitheatre, with a chorus, and the actors wearing masks. To prepare myself for that task, I went to the library of the University, where I read books about

it, and wrote important details down. The reading of my essay took a whole hour and brought acclaim by the teacher and the colleagues. Other pupils had to do similar work on other subjects.

I also want to mention that early in life, when I was about 16, a colleague of mine, Albert Welt, proposed to me to study English together. We got up very early each morning, at 6 o'clock, and went together to the Volksgarten. We sat each on a separate bench with a book, that gave, of course, the meaning of each word and the pronunciation, and we then sat together and read small sentences together. It was fun, and we did that for quite some time.

Two more interesting things are worth mentioning. I was interested in American history and wanted a complete list of all the presidents. I got one by using the encyclopedia, which we called lexicon. At that time, Taft was president. I looked him up in the lexicon, and found that he was the successor of Theodore Roosevelt. Then I looked up Theodore Roosevelt and found that he was the successor of president McKinley, who was assassinated, and so on, till I had a complete list of all the presidents from George Washington to Taft. And there was one more interesting thing: I always had the feeling that I will get one day to America. That was one of the reasons why I had started to learn the English language. One day, I got an American flag, made of silk, of the size of a handkerchief, and for a long time I wore it, nicely folded up, in the front pocket of my jacket, so that the stars or stripes could be seen. I always said and still say it that I have a sixth sense, foreseeing unforeseeable events.

Before closing the chapter about my younger years, I should say something about my more private, intimate life. I was now 17

years old and a so-called handsome fellow, and I liked girls already for years, and some girls liked me, and I had a few times fallen in love. The one I really loved and for a longer period of time up to the time of the outbreak of the war, was Mitzi Klein., who lived with her parents and one brother in the house next to ours. She was very pretty, slender, and had especially long eye-lashes. I played on the piano in her house, when the young people were dancing. We went often out on walks, also on excursions in groups, but it took a long, long time, till we kissed each other. I had a competitor, Raimund Zwirzina, called Mundi, a very handsome fellow, and I often thought to have reasons for jealousy and great unhappiness, when I thought that she preferred him. I wrote poems for her, even composed music to these poems. Unhappiness changed to happiness from one day to the next. I always had a revolver in my house, also a rifle. Once my unhappiness was so great that I was very close to committing suicide. But I changed my mind in time. That was the smartest thing I ever did.

There were some wars before during my lifetime: The Russo-Japanese war, February 10, 1904 to September 5, 1905, ending with the victory of Japan, and taking over besides important Russian territories the reign of Korea. Then the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, which belonged to Turkey, by Austrian-Hungarian troops on October 6, 1908. This caused great disappointment in Serbia, which had long desired to get these two provinces, and increased the enmity between Serbia and Austria. Then the Tripolitanian war, October 5, 1911 between Italy and Turkey, ending with the annexation of Tripolitania, now called Lybia, by Italy and the treaty of Lausanne, October 18, 1912.

Next came the First Balkan War, October 18, 1912, between Bulgaria, Serbia, and Greece on one side, and Turkey on the other, each of the three first mentioned intent to grab a part of the European territory Of Turkey. At that time, at the age of 15, I was already very interested in these political events and observed the changes of the map of the Balkan intensely. Montenegro had also joined in the attack. The treaty of London on May 30, 1913, ended this First Balkan War with the loss by Turkey of almost all the European territory. The Bulgarians had advanced to the Chatalja Line, a row of fortifications for the protection of Constantinople, which was then the capital of Turkey. The Bulgarians had been warned by the Russians, not to go beyond this line. Constantinople and the Bosphorus were too important to the Russians, since they were at the narrow entrance into the Black Sea. But the victors were not satisfied, each of them demanding parts, which were given to the others, and so the Second Balkan War started on June 29, 1913, with the attack of Serbia and Greece against Bulgaria. Now Turkey resumed the war and attacked again Bulgaria, and Rumania entered the war as a new participant, attacking Bulgaria from the North.

Bulgaria was rapidly defeated and the war ended on August 10, 1913, with the treaty of Bucharest. Bulgaria was the loser and had to give up some of the occupied territory, a part of Macedonia, but kept a short coastline on the Aegean Sea at Dedeagatch. Rumania gained a part of the Dobrudja near the Black Sea, and there were many re-adjustments of the borders of the other Balkan countries. The Serbs, who had advanced to the Adriatic Sea, were later forced by an ultimatum of Austria to give up that territory. Greece, which had advanced too far North, had to give up a part

of that territory by an Austria-Italian demand, and Montenegro was forced to give up Skutari, which it had occupied, and the State of Albania was created, with Tirana as the capital, and Serbia remained land-locked.

After that, there was relative peace in Europe and everything seemed fine. We lived like in a paradise. All the wars described were far away, and we were not touched by them. There were manipulations by the great powers, treaties of friendship and what have you, and we read about it in the newspapers, visits by the Russian Zar in Berlin, by the King of Italy in Vienna, unrest here, unrest there, exchange of diplomatic notes, ultimatums. But in general, there was peace, probably preoccupation by older people, but we younger people in Czernowitz did not care. For us it was living in paradise. There was only school, that required some effort. The sixth year of gymnasium was coming to an end. Else had come home from Vienna with all her paintings and drawings. My stepfather's business was going very well. The magazines were filled with bottles of mineral water, many thousands of them. There was little Walter, whom I loved very much, and on whom I spent much of my free time. I contributed very much to his education during his first four years. He was a gorgeous child and very intelligent. This may have been the reason that his father liked me very much.

Stadttheater in Czernowitz.

Montag, den 18. August 1913

Wohltätigkeits-Vorstellung

zu Gunsten des k. k. österreichischen Luftflottenvereines.

Zur Aufführung gelangt:

Staatsanwalt Alexander

Schauspiel in 4 Akten von Karl Schüler.



PERSONEN:

Dr. Heinrich Alexander, Erster Staatsanwalt	Adolf Mechner
Dr. Otto Alexander, sein Sohn	Ludwig Sammler
Wehner, Landgerichtsdirektor	Max Tannenbaum
Dr. Behling, Assessor	Jakob Robinsohn
Schneller, Rechtsanwalt	Doris Telson
Frau Wild	Erna Polesi
Kaspar Wild	Heinrich Beron
Lisbeth Hesse	René Frühling
Mirzel Schmidt	Jetty Salikmann
Wenderot, Gerichtsdienner	Leo Hafner
Ein Kriminalkommissär	Rudolf Rosenblatt
Ein Gefangenwärter	Emil Katz
Ein Polizist	Brontys Orel

Zeit: Gegenwart.

Ort der Handlung: das Dienstzimmer Alexanders.

1914

CHAPTER 6

WORLD WAR I.

But then, one day, there was a thunderclap. On June 28, 1914, the archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria and his wife were assassinated during a visit to Sarajevo in Bosnia by a young Serbian, Gavrilo Princip, a member of a terrorist organization. The Vienna government was convinced of the complicity of Serbia. Franz Ferdinand was the crownprince since 1889, when the only

son of emperor Franz Josef I., crownprince Rudolph, had committed suicide. Since then, for 25 years, crownprince Franz Ferdinand had waited to become emperor, and was, when he died, 51 years old. He was not especially popular in Austria, but there was outrage in the world and sympathy for Austria. It was generally believed that a localized settlement would be possible. There were consultations between Germany and Austria, and war against Serbia was considered. But England, France, and Russia also held consultations and concluded that the best way out in that serious situation would be to exert pressure on Austria to negotiate and not to take drastic steps. But an Austrian crown council decided to send an ultimatum to Serbia with many demands, difficult to accept by an autonomous country. One of the conditions of that ultimatum was, that Austrian police should be allowed to enter Serbia and search there for the perpetrators of the assassination and bring them to Austria to court.

Serbia received assurances from Russia that it would declare war on Austria in case that Serbia would be attacked, and Russia had received assurances from France of support. Whatever Austria had done, was, as is generally believed, instigated by Germany. The ultimatum was taken to Berlin, before it was sent to Serbia.

The answer of Serbia to the Austrian ultimatum was vague, and Serbia had ordered mobilization against Austria, and Austria mobilized against Serbia. This was on July 25, 1914, almost a month after the assassination of the crownprince Franz Ferdinand. England proposed a conference by the great powers to settle the whole affair, but Austria and Germany refused. On July 28, Austria declared war on Serbia, and for the next few days, while notes were going forth and back between the great powers, gene-

ral mobilizations were started, first in Russia, then in Germany, declaration of war by Germany on Russia on August 1, then on France on August 3, followed by the declaration of war by England on Germany on August 4, by Germany on Belgium, by Austria on Russia on August 6. Then followed more declarations of war, by Montenegro on Austria on August 5, by Serbia on Germany on August 6, by Montenegro on Germany on August 8, by France on Austria on ~~---~~ August 12, by England on Austria also on August 12, by Japan on Germany on August 23, by Japan on Austria on August 25, by Austria on Belgium on August 28, by Russia on Turkey on November 2, Serbia on Turkey on November 2, England on Turkey on November 5, and also France on Turkey on November 5. Italy, which was bound by the Tripartite Plan, the Triple Alliance, to participate in any war, in which Austria and Germany were involved, broke the agreement and remained neutral, a great disappointment for Austria and Germany. Later on, on May 23, 1915, it entered the war against Austria and Germany. This war could have been avoided, but Germany wanted it and instigated Austria. The old emperor, Franz Josef I. was senile, 84 years old. The German Kaiser Wilhelm II and his chancellor Bethmann-Hollweg and the Austrian chancellor, count Berchtold, co-operated and achieved what they wanted. There were the German generals Ludendorff, Falkenhayn, Moltke, who all wanted war. And they got it, the most terrible war.

At the time of the assassination of the crownprince there were big headlines in the news papers, followed by daily exciting news, when the diplomatic maneuvers started, but still, there was peace, and practically nobody thought that war may result. Especially we young people did not think about it. It was all

the time like a thunder very far away, lightning far away, but still peace and everything fine as usual. The newspapers brought the news all the time with much optimism, since there were conferences, which could lead to a settlement. We believed that our emperor and emperor Wilhelm II. wanted peace, and made great efforts to achieve it. This had a calming effect and we felt secure, for a while at least, for a few weeks. That was in July.

But the news and the headlines became more and more serious, and then, one day, the storm broke loose, with the Austrian general mobilization on July 31, and the next day by Russia and Germany, and declarations of war. The newspapers told us all the time that our fatherland had been attacked, and that we had to act in selfdefense, and we believed all that.

And now, over night, something that nobody had expected developed, an enormous enthusiasm for the war. From early in the morning on, great masses of people gathered in the center of our city, and everybody felt like electrified. The people stood there and sang patriotic songs, young and old alike. The same thing was reported from other cities, from Vienna, Berlin, and Paris. There were some older people, who kept silent, who had other ideas about war, but the masses were there and they shouted and sang, and they appeared happy. Very soon, troops began to march, with music bands in front. That went on for two days. But many young people had to run, they had to run to their commands, to put on their uniforms, and soon the enthusiasm calmed down.

Soon my cousin Marzell Drancz came, dressed in a gray uniform, and he looked great. He had to go to his regiment, and he stayed only a few hours in our home. I kind of envied him.

I had already before the idea of entering the army voluntarily, and when I saw him, my enthusiasm for the war grew. Many of my colleagues wanted to do the same. And I really went into a mobilization barracks, but there I was told that I was too young and that I needed a consent of my parents. But my mother refused to give it to me, and I consented that I would wait till I was 18.

Our city, which was near the Russian border, had to count with an invasion by Russian troops, and many families packed and left, most of them for Vienna. The news during the first few weeks were good, there were victories for the Germans on the Russian front, and right in the beginning the Germans invaded Belgium and occupied it within a short time. The Germans also advanced into France to the Marne river. But bad news soon came from the Russian front, where the Russian troops had advanced deep into Galicia. These news were bad for the Bukowina also.

One night, at the end of August, there was an enormous explosion, and soon we found out that the bridge over the river Pruth had been destroyed by the Austrian troops. Everybody started now to run, to grab a few valuables, to pack them into valises, and to run into the streets. We thought that we would still get a train and would leave. But since the main bridge had collapsed, no train came and there was no chance to go to Galicia. Everybody now ran to the other station, station Volksgarten, hoping to get a train to the south of the Bukowina and to Rumania. But no train came there either and after many hours of waiting, we went back home. My brother-in-law, Paul Rosegg, states that he remembers having seen me at the station Volksgarten that night, standing there with a valise, wearing a derby hat, which we called in German Steifhut (stiff hat).

For the next two or three days we heard rifle fire, and many people went to certain high areas in parks and observed movements of our troops in the fields. It did not take long and the Russian troops entered the city, on September 15. They were under the command of general Evreimow, and they entered with very little shooting. I saw the general, who had a little white beard, and seemed to be a rather old man. He had an easy job taking Czernowitz, since the Austrian troops had retreated into the Carpathian mountains.

There followed days of great depression. The Russian troops were well disciplined. But the general demanded a large contribution of money, and since most of the rich people had left the city and the banks had been evacuated, before the Russians came, there was not much money, and therefore the general demanded that all the people should bring their silver and jewellery within two days to a certain place, a large office building. That was done and the people got receipts. This he demanded as assurance, that the Russian troops would not be harmed by anybody. A few days later, to show his magnanimity, everybody could take the things, they had handed over, back with their receipts. There were very few incidents, where Russian soldiers had entered stores and demanded merchandise. Some of them were apprehended by their officers, and first of all whipped with a whip, which every officer carried, and then arrested. In general, we had a bad time, and reason to worry. The schools were closed, and there were, of course, no newspapers. On account of that there were all kinds of rumors about events in the war, about victories of the Austrian and German troops, and also about reverses. My enthusiasm for the war had abated since a long time, and especially since the

invasion of the Bukowina by the Russians.

But after a defeat in Galicia, the Russians retreated, and had to pull the front back, and in November Lemberg and Czernowitz were free again.

But we still heard from far away cannon fire, especially at night, and we knew that we were still in danger, and that we would have to leave our home. This was very difficult to accomplish, since the way to the north through Galicia was interrupted. There remained only the railway to the south to the border of Rumania, which at that time still was a neutral country. We had to plan what to do, and I remember that Else was in the center and had a leading part in the conversations, and the planning. We had relatives in the city Suczawa, which was near the border of Rumania, and it was decided to visit them there, and to try to go from there through Rumania to Vienna. We packed in a hurry took the most necessary things along and left, but in the excitement left a large cassette with silver table ware on the table. We gave the key to the apartment to one of our neighbors. My stepfather had left long before, had entered the army, since he was a relatively young man, about 38 years old.

Anyway, we all left for Suczawa, and stayed for about two days in the home of our relatives. We learned there that only women and children could leave the country, but not males, who were liable for military service in the Austrian army. We probably knew it already before, and had planned what we would do. I said good-bye to my mother, Else, and little Walter, who took the train through Rumania, whereas I was put in a horse-drawn carriage, which took a very long road toward the Carpathian mountains, through the cities Gurahumora, Kimpolung, and Dorna-Watra.

There I succeeded, by paying some money, in being put on a military truck and, hidden under straw, to go through the Carpathian Mountains, and after passing the border control undiscovered, to get into Hungary and to the first railway station Borgo-Prund. From there it was easy to get a train, which took me the long way through Hungary to Vienna. This was the first time that I had become a refugee. My brother Carl tells me now in a letter that he went exactly the same way from Suczawa to Vienna, probably a day before or a day after me.

Anyway, we were now all together in Vienna, and stayed for a few days in the home of my aunt Rosa, which was in the 8th district in the Schloesselgasse. It was at about the end of November, when we had arrived there. My mother, Else, and Walter had arrived about two days earlier, and went immediately to look for an apartment. They found one in the 4th district in the Margarethen Strasse No. 50, a small apartment for my mother and Walter, and another room, one flight up in the same house, for Else. I got an invitation from aunt Rosa to stay in her apartment, which I, of course, accepted.

Vienna made an enormous impression on me. I found it beautiful, especially the inner city, the 1st district, which was surrounded by the Ringstrasse with its beautiful buildings. I had lived all my life in Czernowitz, which was a small town, and Vienna was an enormous city, and now everything was so different. I soon found out that most of the professors from the gymnasium in Czernowitz had also emigrated to Vienna, and that school had started a few weeks before. I registered right away for the seventh grade.

The school was the Saphiengymnasium in the 2nd district in the Circusgasse. In the morning, the Viennese students had their

classes, and we refugees from Czernowitz had the classes in the afternoon, so-called parallel classes. Getting there from the 8th district by streetcar took quite some time, but I attended the school regularly. Carl got soon an engagement with the theatre in Posen in Germany as operetta tenor for a whole season, where he was very successful.

My aunt Gusta and her daughter Isabella had also come from their hometown Storozynetz in the Bukowina, and they found an apartment in the 4th district near my mother. Her husband, uncle Isidor, who was a physician, had probably stayed behind in Storozynetz, or perhaps joined them later. I don't remember to have seen him in Vienna. Neither did I see my stepfather there, while I was in Vienna.

A completely different life had begun for me, and it was not easy to adjust. I lived now in the home of my aunt Rosa. It was a nice apartment on the second floor, consisting of two bedrooms, a living room between them, and a very large entrance hall, which was also the dining room, and next to it the kitchen. In one bedroom aunt Rose and uncle Emmerich, called Imre, were sleeping, in the living room the two boys, Herbert and Felix, and the third room was shared by my cousin Alice and me. There was a maid, who slept in the kitchen. It was a peculiar situation, but nobody ever found anything peculiar about it. After all, I was only a young boy, 17½ years old, and cousin Alice was already 19. She was extremely beautiful, tall, with long, blond hair, and, of course, I fell in love with her and she with me. But nobody noticed it, or at least seemed to notice it, as we knew how to conceal it in the presence of others. Aunt Rosa, I am sure, knew it, and she had planned it this way, and as a

good mother, wanted her daughter to have a good time. When everybody went to bed at night, we two went into our room and closed the door. We were never disturbed, it never happened that anybody came into our room at night. We started the night by reading. I had a philosophical book, which I read to her every evening, "Sex and Character" by Otto Weininger, a very famous book in those days. But I was not very successful, trying to explain complicated statements and ideas to her, and it was to no avail. But I continued reading every evening one or two chapters to her, till we got sleepy. I can say, that these were very happy times in my life. This went on for about half a year."

This was one part of my life in my aunt's home. But my life there was filled out with many other activities. There was ~~Erme-~~rich Hartmann, called uncle Imre, whom I had already mentioned before, whom my aunt had married around the year 1910, after my grandfather had died, and after she divorced her first husband in Berlin. I had also mentioned that uncle Imre became blind and had developed all the serious symptoms of tabes dorsalis. It was a tragedy. He was a tall, still very good-looking man, with a blond mustache, but quite helpless. He was unsteady on his feet, but could walk in the house without help, holding on to the furniture. At the table he needed help, as the meat had to be cut for him. His right hand was not well under his control. For instance, when going down the stairs and holding on to the banister with his right hand, it often happened that the hand went up into the air, and he lost the grip of the banister. But I was leading him, when walking with him, and, as far as I remember, he never fell. I went very often out on walks with him. I liked him very much, and he liked me too, I am sure. I spent much time

with him, from morning till noontime, when I had to leave for school. I had to read to him the newspaper, The Neue Freie Presse. He was very interested in the news of the war, and so was I.

During the two months, when we had the Russians in Czernowitz, we did not know what was going on on the war fronts. But after they left, we heard the news that in the meantime the Germans had occupied almost all of Belgium and had advanced in France to the river Marne, but had been stopped there, almost miraculously, by the French and English troops. They never advanced to any degree beyond that line during the rest of the war.

But on the Eastern front it was a different story, as the Russians had advanced deep into Galicia, but further north the Germans under General Hindenburg had won a great victory over the Russians at Tannenberg. On the Serbian front in the south, the Austrians advanced slowly and it took some time, till they occupied Belgrad. This was the situation, when I started to read regularly every day the newspaper to uncle Imre.

He was an enormously cultured and knowledgable man in many fields. I had to read to him many books; which interested him. Among the most important I remember a book by the great zoologist and paleontologist Cuvier, who lived from 1769 to 1832, who was the founder of the sciences of comparative anatomy and paleontology. Then I remembr to have read a book about the island Atlantis, in which the author tried to prove that it really existed once, and formed a land bridge between Europe and America. This is still believed by many. It was a large, really interesting book. Then I read to him a book about historic places in Vienna and each time, when we finished a chapter, we went out to the place we had read about. These were places, where once walls

were, rests of the walls which surrounded Vienna, when the Turks besieged the city in 1529. There was later again a siege of Vienna by the Turks in 1683. He knew exactly where to take me, and I learned how to walk with him. Each time we had to cross a street, I pressed his arm and he knew that he had to step down from the sidewalk, and then I pressed again his arm, and he knew that he had to step up onto the sidewalk. These were long and most interesting walks.

Sometimes there were difficulties, when he had to go to a toilet. Vienna had many public toilets, but when we were not near such a place, we were in a dilemma, no matter how fast we walked. He had no control over his bowels, the poor man. He never accepted my help, and I had to wait outside, and somehow he cleaned himself and we went home, where he had to change cloths. But in general, I had much pleasure with him, and I learned a lot on account of the wonderful books I read to him. He also liked it very much, when I played on the piano for him, especially Hungarian melodies. Once a week, a young lady came, and they studied together old French, as it was spoken about 1000 years ago. By the way, in the gymnasium, we also learned German as it was spoken in the middle ages. Uncle Imre, (the Hungarian name for Emmerich) was born in Slovakia, which belonged to Hungary, but was of German descent. He was always sitting in an armchair, often suffering from terrible so-called lancinating pains, which went through his whole body like lightning, especially on days when the weather was changing. His memory was not affected and neither was his speech. His gait was peculiar and typical for tabes dorsalis: He threw his legs too far forward, before the foot reached the ground again. When I walked

with him, he could walk quite fast.

I went often with cousin Alice to the theatre. The Burg-theater was very near, within walking distance, also the Deutsches Volkstheater, and we saw many beautiful shows, classical and modern ones, and sometimes we also went to the opera. We sat, of course, high up in the gallery. I often visited my mother in the Margarethenstrasse, went there usually on foot, which took me almost an hour, and my mother sometimes came to visit us, which was not difficult by streetcar.

Else was then already engaged, her fiancée, whose name was Franz Lang, was a student of architecture. He later got a job with the Department of Architecture. I liked him very much. He was goodlooking and a very fine gentleman. He lived with his parents in the same house, where my mother and Else lived, on the ground floor. He had a sister Mitzi, extremely beautiful. Later, when I was in the army, Else and Franz got married. But the marriage did not last long, only about two years. They had a nice artist's studio in the Wiedener Hauptstrasse in the 4th district, where Else did some painting, while he went to work.

In the meantime, the war expanded more and more, since Turkey had entered the war on the side of the central powers, Austria and Germany, and Japan on the side of the allies, England, France, and Russia. Germany had many colonies in Africa and Asia, and there also war fronts opened. On the high seas there were sea battles and many large ships were sunk. Australia and New Zealand had also sent troop contingents to the war fronts. On the Russian front the Russians had succeeded in taking the fortress of Przemyśl in Galicia, and had penetrated the Carpathian Mountains and occupied a small area in Hungary. In Galicia they had

advanced to Krakow. But an Autrian-German offensive at Gorlice was successful and the Russians retreated, Przemysl was retaken, also Lemberg. This is only a short outline of the happenings in the war in the first few months. It would take much more effort and time to describe many details. But this I will not do. After all, this is a biography of our family and I have to concentrate on that. Some details of the war will have to be mentioned, as far as they affected us personally. It was a terrible, bloody war with loss of life of millions of people, lasting over 4 years.

I have advanced in the description of events regarding our family to the middle of the year 1915. Things had gotten quite bad. There was already scarcity of food, and bread and meat were rationed, also gasoline. But my life up to that time was relatively pleasant, it was nice in the home of aunt Rosa, especially on account of Alice and uncle Imre.

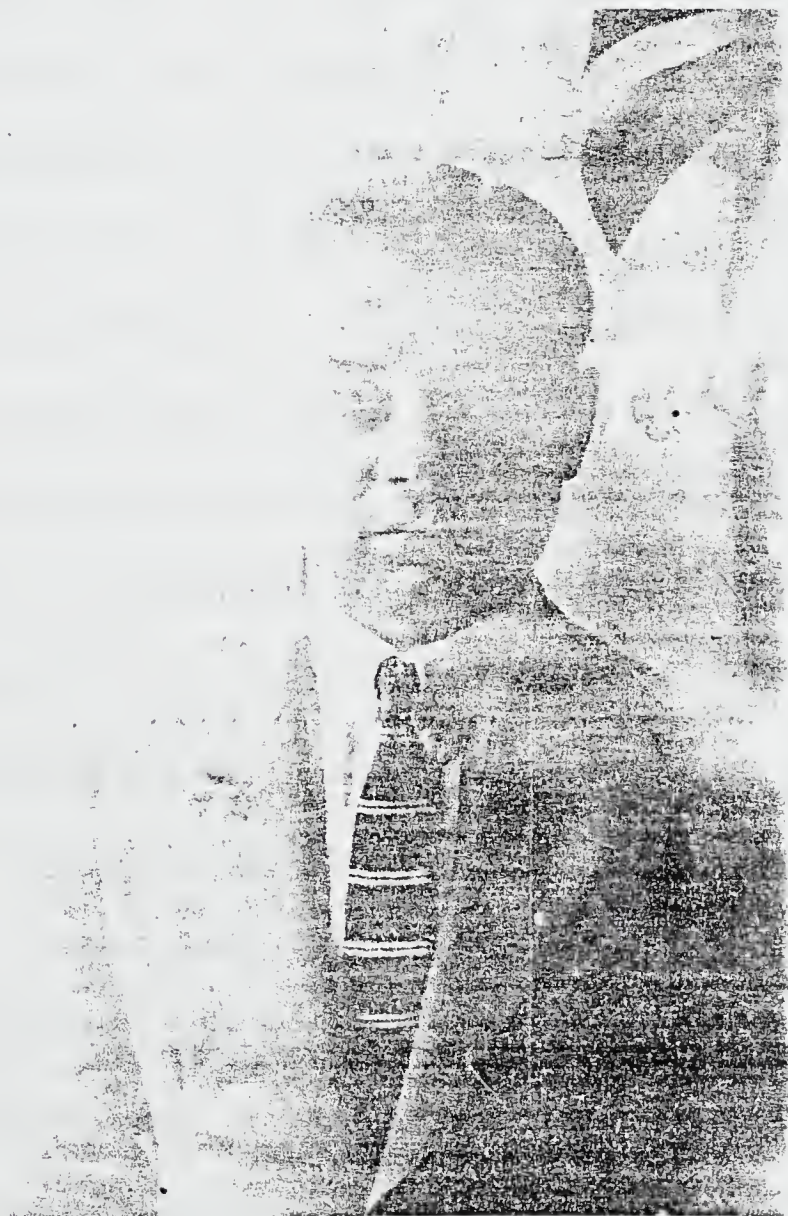
All that ended suddenly, when the fiancée of Alice arrived from Rumania. His name was Samuil Patras, and he was of Rumanian nationality. He had studied dentistry and apparently had finished his studies in Bucharest. I was quite disappointed when I saw him and spoke with him. He was a very primitive man, heavy built, and quite uneducated, a real peasant. How Alice could have chosen him was difficult for me to understand. I did not see much love between them, nor real affection. He often lifted her up and carried her around, to show his strength. I was quite unhappy.

Anyway, I had to leave and moved to the apartment of my mother. I lost much when I left the home of aunt Rosa, I lost Alice and uncle Imre. School also ended soon, and I advanced to the eighth grade. Since I was already over 18 years old, I had to enlist in the army, and the day for entering the army was fixed: It was

the 15th of October, 1915, and I was happy that I was accepted in the Infanterie Regiment No. 83, which was stationed in Vienna in the 21st district, as a so-called Einjaehrig-Freiwilliger on account of my college education, which implied that I would later be sent to an officers school and become an officer.

There was still the long summer before us, and now my mother and aunt Gusta^{had} planned something very special: Aunt Gusta wanted for some reason to travel back to Storozynetz in the Bukowina, and I should accompany her, and I should go to Czernowitz to pick up the cassette with silver ware, which we had left there and some other valuable things. What reason aunt Gusta had to go there, I don't know anymore. Perhaps uncle Isidor was there and she wanted to join him. The train connection through Galicia was free since the retreat of the Russian army. So, one day, we left and it was a long journey. Normally, it would have taken one day only, but we were about three days on the road. There were long delays in smaller, war-torn cities, and I remember that we had to stay in a small town, Kolomea, about half a day. We stayed in a Jewish house near the railway station, where we could get only some bread and milk. There was a very small child lying in a crib and sleeping, and the face of the child was covered with flies, which we constantly chased away, but they were back on the child's face the next moment. It was hopeless. I remember that the train had to go over the river Pruth over the bridge, which was destroyed by our troops the year before. It was now a wooden bridge and the train moved very slowly and noisily over that bridge.

I got out in Czernowitz and aunt Gusta continued her ride to Storozynetz. I found our apartment in relatively good condition, and the maid of our neighbors was there and gave me the keys and



the cassette with the silverware, which she had found on the table and taken to her apartment to hide it.

The city had changed very much since we had left. There was little life, since many people had left and only the poor people had stayed. The University was re-opened, also some other schools, and the City Hall and other institutions functioned again. Many stores had opened again, mainly food stores. At night, the thunder of the cannons could be heard, and people feared a new Russian invasion. That happened later in 1916.

I was supposed to return to Vienna soon. But I met some friends and there were many pretty girls around, and I had the home for myself and so I delayed my departure. I had a real good time there. Then there came a letter from my mother, urging me to return. So, I packed and left, the same way I had come, over the wooden bridge over the river Pruth, and the long way through Galicia and Moravia to Vienna.

All the refugees from Galicia and the Bukowina were supported by the government, and so were my mother and Walter too. Every two weeks, she had to travel to the 2nd district to receive an amount of money, and later, when I lived with her, the amount was increased. This was of great importance, as we did not have anything to live on, since we had lost everything when we emigrated. We had abandoned in Czernowitz the storerooms, filled to capacity with merchandise. Therefore, little cash was available which we could take along, just enough for fares and expenses in the beginning. That is why the support by the refugee committee was of such importance to us. It was probably not much, what my mother received, and I assume that my stepfather, who was in the army, sent her regularly a part of his salary.

She had to economise, the poor soul, but I don't remember that I ever heard her complain. She was always nicely dressed, and prepared nice meals. Once Carl came back, after the theatre season in Posen had ended. Since my mothers apartment was too small, we rented a room around the corner in a house in the Kettenbrueckengasse No.6, which had a plaque outside that said, that Franz Schubert had once lived in that house. Schubert had also died in that house.

The people who rented the room to us were a couple in the 60th, very nice to us. The man played in the orchestra of the opera house, I think the flute, and his wife was an usher there. Once our sister Else had to stay with us over night. I don't remember anymore for what reason, and we had no chance to talk to our landlords about it. When they saw her in the morning, they were furious, as they thought that we had taken a girl for pleasure into our room. We had to convince them that she was our sister, and then everything was alright again.

The time came closer for our enlisting in the army, and we had to prepare ourselves for it. Carl had to enlist and leave earlier than I, and he had to travel to Kielce in the occupied part of Poland, where he enlisted in the Infanterie Regiment No.6. On account of his studies in the Akademie fuer Musik und darstellende Kunst he was accepted as Einjaehrig-Freiwilliger, and was later sent to the officers school in Troppau in Silesia, from which he returned as a Korporal to Kielce, and was soon sent to the Russian front near Kirlibaba in the Carpathian Mountains. That much about him for the time being.

My first day as a soldier was the 15th of October, 1915. I had to be at a certain hour there in the morning, and we soon received our uniforms. It was not easy to get the right

size of blouse, pants, and shoes. Our civilian cloths we had to pack and put away. Later, we took them home. Many of us were young fellows from Vienna, but there were many boys from Hungary. The Infanterie Regiment No.83, with dark brown collars, was a Hungarian regiment, stationed in Szombathely in Hungary near the Austrian border, but one company was stationed in Vienna. Soon we were in the midst of people, who spoke only Hungarian.

I and many other Viennese boys received the permission to live outside the barracks in private rooms. But for the first 14 days we were not allowed to go outside, since we had to get first basic instructions, in the first place how to salute others, who had already stars on their collars, and officers. We had received uniforms, which were very special and beautiful, especially the pants. They were blue and quite tight, so that the shape of the thighs and lower legs were exposed, and the lower ends of the pants were in the shoes. The upper parts of the pants above the knees had as an ornament a yellow cord. It was a complicated design, with many loops and looked quite good.

The drill started the next morning and was very rigorous. The commando language was German and that was good. We had to learn to stand straight and the commando was "Habt acht" and meant not only standing straight, but also to pull the shoulders backward, and to push the chest out, to keep the hands on the sides of the thighs, with the fingers close together, to keep the heels tight together and the feet on an angle separated. Saluting had to be done by putting the right hand straight at the edge of the cap. Other commands were "links um", which meant turn to the left, and "rechts um", turn to the right, which had to be done in a certain way, using the heel of one foot and the tip of the other foot to

turn and then to bring ~~to bring~~ the heels together again. "Kehrt Euch" meant turning around 180 degrees, and "Ruht" meant relax by putting one foot a little forward and moving about freely. And there were many, many other commands, which we learned gradually. Then came exercises early in the morning for at least two hours, also exercises with the rifle, which were quite strenuous, running, throwing yourself to the ground, crawling, getting up, etc. Most of us regarded the exercises as healthy and also as fun.

We learned also many other things, for instance how to put your bed in order, how to clean your eating utensils and store them away,

At 9 o'clock in the evening at the signal of a trumpet, everybody had to be in bed. We sang songs while in bed and that seemed to be permitted. At 5 in the morning, the trumpeter woke us up, and everybody had to jump out of bed, wash up with very little water and soap, get dressed, put the bed in order, and get on the line for coffee and bread. At 6, we had to stand outside in line, while the major and other officers passed by, inspecting us. Then we marched to the exercise grounds, which was the grass-land area between the Danube river and a dam, many kilometers long, the so-called inundation area, to prevent a wide area beyond the dam from being flooded. That was an ideal exercise field, and for the next few months we were there every day, except Sundays, for 6 hours till we marched to the barracks for lunch. I do not remember anymore, what we got to eat, probably a thick soup with some meat in it, beans, or noodles, or potatoes, and may be an apple in the end. There was usually then a rest period for two hours, and then we had to attend classes, usually about the reglement, a thick book containing all the rules in military matters,

which contained everything a soldier had to know. After dinner we sat around and talked, or sang, or played chess, or studied the reglement.

After the first 14 days, we were allowed to go home on Saturday afternoon for the weekend, and I took the long ride by street-car home to my mother. I had a lot to tell her. Long before 9 o'clock in the evening, I was back in the barracks. Since I had the permission to sleep outside the barracks, I had rented a room in a house near the barracks, and so I slept in a comfortable bed. But I had to be very careful to get up in time, so that I would not miss the coffee, and be at 6 o'clock at my place in the row between my comrades. I had also to be careful to be before 9 o'clock in the evening in my room. No soldier was allowed to be in the street after 9, and cars with military police patrouilled the streets frequently. Life was not easy, but I took it in stride. I was glad that I could go home on Saturdays to my mother and little Walter. I had learned that some boys could get a loaf of bread from the sargent, whose duty it was to supply all the food for the kitchen. So, I tried too and for a very small amount of money I got from him a big loaf of commis bread. This I brought in a brown paperbag to my mother and made her very happy. Bread was rationed and very difficult to get. That I did every Saturday with few exceptions, when the sargent had no bread left.

One morning, I had a mishap. A few seconds before 6 o'clock in the morning, a metal button of my coat - it was winter already - fell off. I was desperate, but found a way out. There was no time to sew it on. The button had a little ring in the back. So, I made a tiny hole in the coat, pushed the ring through and put a match through the ring. Unfortunately, a sargent had seen

what I had done, and reported me right away to the major. When the major inspected the company, he stopped in front of me, and the sargent showed him the match in back of the button. The major was furious, or pretended to be furious, and punished me right away with two weeks' barracks arrest. That meant sleeping in the barracks and not going home on two weekends. It was hard. I had to sit evenings with the boys, who were mostly Hungarians, talk or play chess with them. I had learned to speak Hungarian and could communicate with them quite well. There came Christmas, and we had two days free to go home. I don't remember how we celebrated it at home. Probably with a good meal and a good cake, made by my mother, and Else and her fiancée Franzi were probably present too.

In the war the situation had changed considerably since Italy had declared war on Austria-Hungary on May 23, 1915, and entered the war on the side of the Allies. Germany at once severed diplomatic relations with Italy, but did not declare war. It took more than a year till Italy declared war on Germany on August 28, 1916. On October 14, 1915, Bulgaria entered the war on the side of the central powers and invaded Serbia. England and France declared war on Bulgaria and so did Russia and Italy. The Bulgarians advanced rapidly deep into Serbia. The Serbs were in full flight into Albania, and the Austrians occupied Montenegro and advanced into Albania. King Nikita of Montenegro and Prince Wied of Albania had fled to Italy. The Serbian troops took refuge on the island of Corfu, which belonged to Greece, which was neutral.

On the Russian front the Germans were very successful and had taken all of Poland, Lithuania, and Courland. The front line

ran from Riga on the Baltic Sea to Baranovici, Pinsk, Tarnopol, and Czernowitz. On the Italian front there were no major changes. The front was on the Isonzo river and there were in the first year four offensives by the Italians, but they were unable to break through. On the western front there were severe battles, four major offensives, but the Germans did not lose any territory, and the situation remained almost unchanged till the end of 1915.

I had only on weekends an opportunity to read the newspapers, but I followed the events with great interest. Big parts of Russian territory were occupied, Serbia was eliminated or rather crushed, and on the western and Italian front there were no changes. I became very optimistic, and my patriotic feelings increased. We believed at that time everything that the newspapers brought, that Austria-Hungary and Germany were attacked in a treacherous way by the enemies and that we acted in self-defense. The young people, all of them, were proud to wear the uniform and to contribute to the defense of the fatherland. The hardships of the military drill and the daily exercises were accepted as necessary, and we became used to it. There were some sadistic people among the instructors, sargents and officers, who for some reason were never sent to the war front. They were a curse for the young people and were hated, but even that was accepted as a necessary evil.

We were now in the midst of a very severe winter. Nevertheless, the drill continued. Many boys had frostbite, still we had to stand still, or lie in the snow and crawl. I became gradually sick, had rheumatic pains in the whole body, but never went to a doctor. When I woke up in the morning, my hands and



feet were stiff, and I had to rub them to loosen the joints. Every evening I used an ammoniated gel, called Opodeldoc, an old medicine, which we had used as children, to rub around my joints. I did not know then, but I knew later that I had gone through a period of rheumatic fever. Still, everything else was fine and I accepted it.

But one day, a great change took place. Although there was a rumor for some time, the official announcement came to us as a shock. Having registered with the Infanterie Regiment No.83 in Vienna had led all of us to believe that we will stay always with this regiment. But the regiment did not need that many aspirants for the degree of officers. There were many other regiments in Hungary, Bohemia, Croatia, etc, which did not have enough of these aspirants, which were called Einjaehrig-Freiwillige. One day came the announcement that many of us were transferred to other regiments, and among them was I also. 16 of us were transferred to the Infanterie Regiment No.19 in Leva in Hungary, and we had to leave on January 27, 1916.

I had to bid farewell to my mother, Else, Walter, aunt Rosa, uncle Imre, and Alice. Uncle Imre gave me a long hug. He knew that he would not be alive anymore, when I will return.

Nothing could be done and we had to take the train to Leva. When we arrived there, there came another surprise. The regiment, since it had 4 companies, sent to each company 4 of us. But one of the companies was stationed outside of Leva, about 5 miles north in a small village, Nagy-Kereskeny, and that was the place, where I and 3 other boys, Mannheim, Markasinski, and Buchsbaum, had to go. When we arrived there, we were shocked by that what we saw. It was a very small village, with small houses apart

from each other, and the barracks were similar small houses. But wherever we looked, there was mud. There must have been before snow and ice, and since the weather was mild, it had melted and the result was mud. We had to walk through a sea of morass to get to the office to announce our arrival. There was a sargent, to whom we gave our papers and who put down our personal data. He seemed to be friendly. We asked, whether we would be allowed to sleep outside the barracks, and he gave us the permission. We were told that we would have to^{be} at the rapport at exactly 6 o'clock in the morning.

It was late in the afternoon, and somebody showed us, where we could rent rooms, and we got there two rooms. Going there, we had to walk through mud, since there was mud everywhere. We were hungry and asked, where we could get something to eat, and an inn, the only one in the village, was indicated to us. The owner of the inn was a Jew, very friendly, and he lived there with his family, and they had a very pretty young daughter, who served us some food. There were many other soldiers there and among them also the sargent, whom we had met before in the office. We soon went to our new sleeping quarters, and set the alarm clock for 5 in the morning, and went to sleep, two in a room. We rushed in the morning, washed up a little, got dressed and walked fast through the mud to the barracks, hoping to still get some breakfast, and were on time to stand for the rapport in front of the first row. The officer, a captain and the sargent behind him, came to us, asked a few questions and that was all.

The whole company then marched to the exercise fields, singing, as it was usual, military songs, in Hungarian, of which we did not know the words yet. Exercising was the same as before

in Vienna. The commandos were in German. Everything was all-right. The evenings we spent in the inn, and liked to talk to the young daughter of the innkeeper and his wife, who, if I remember right, also spoke some German. There was a lot of shoe-cleaning necessary when we came home, before 9, of course, and also of the pants.

One day, there was a mishap: The alarm clock did not work well and we got ^{up} too late. No matter how much we rushed and ran, when we arrived, the company was already standing in closed ranks, and we had to step into the open places. From then on, everything went wrong. The punishment was that we were not allowed anymore to sleep outside the barracks. We got a room where there were 4 long sacks, filled with straw, on the floor, one pillow each, also filled with straw, and a blanket. It was still winter and quite cold. For heating of the room there was a small iron stove with a tube or funnel for the smoke, leading to the only small window. It seemed to us unbelievable, but that was the situation. No chair, no table, only a few nails on the walls for our cloths. We tried to make a fire in the stove, but had no luck. The wind blew into the pipe, and we got only smoke into the room. Four men in a cold room, with straw sacks on the floor, which was an earthen floor. We asked the sargent how we could heat the room, but we got only a short, snappy answer. No linnen, no towels, no wash stand. We had to walk outside to a pump to wash.

Now we knew what we had not known before. We had heard the words "nemet" (German) and "nemetek" (Germans), and we soon knew that we were meant. We had not known before that the Hungarians hated the Germans. Later we heard also another word:

"Zsido" (Jew), the "Zs" pronounced like the "J" in Jamaica. This had become clear to us by talking to some of the soldiers who showed sympathy and became friendlier. But only two of us were Jews, I and friend Mannheim, the other two not. But generally all 4 of us were looked at as enemies. There was nothing that could have helped us. We were in enemy country and had to endure it. We lied down to sleep in our cloths, and put our coats over the blankets to get some warmth. We had given up trying to make fire in the stove, since we only got smoke into the room, and burning of our eyes. They knew it when they gave us that room as quarters.

But it should get worse. One day they found that we had not cleaned enough our coats, that there were spots of mud on them. The punishment: Arrest for one night, which meant sleeping in a small, narrow cubicle, into which we had to crawl to get inside, and which was inside not high enough to stand up. We were later told that this was once a pigsty. We had to sleep there on straw without any blankets. But we slept anyway, and the next morning we had to brush the straw out of our hair and of our uniforms.

One day, they found something else wrong and there was again punishment, especially severe. This same sargent took us out in the late afternoon for special exercises. For about two hours, we underwent the most strenuous exercises. We had to run in the mud, then we were ordered to kneel down, to get up, to lie down, where there was especially much mud, to get up, to lie down again, then to run again and so on. This went on for two hours. He enjoyed it, how we got dirtier and dirtier, and out of breath. Then we had to go home, that means to our barracks. Cleaning of these coats seemed impossible. With a knife we could scrape off thick

layers of mud, and then we had to hang the coats up for drying. Early in the morning, we started to brush the mud away, and to clean our rifles, which were covered with mud. We still looked quite dirty, when we stood in close ranks and went out to the morning exercises. Behind all that was, of course, the captain. We knew about him as well as about the sargent, that they were never out on the front, that they always stayed in the "Hinterland". There were great many such people in the army, people who had special connections. We used to call them "Drueckeberger", which means people who stay away from danger.

One day we read in the reglement, a book that contained everything about military matters, that a soldier has the right of complaint to the highest officer in the regiment about injustices. I proposed to my colleagues that we should ask for a hearing of a complaint before the commander of the regiment, who was a coronel. Our colleague Markasinski was against it, was afraid that we would all end up in jail. I did not let go, and went into the office and asked the sargent whether there was a possibility to put in a complaint. He said that it was possible, but not more. A complaint that they had put us for a night into a pigsty, and that our room was without heat, and that we had to sleep on strawbags which were on the floor, would have had a strong effect. We expected now that they would make a counter-move and it came very soon.

One day, we were told that we were punished with one week of jail. The reason given was undisciplined behavior. All four of us were transported to Leva, and put there in a prison behind bars. But it was a clean room with beds, and we were rather happy. We could rest there and were treated nicely. Our col-

leagues from Vienna, 12 of them, who were transferred together with us, came every afternoon to the window and could not believe their ears when we told them what kind of treatment we had gone through in Nagy-Kereskeny. They brought us every day good things to eat, like cookies, candies, chocolate, etc. They told us that they were treated nicely, and that they soon will be sent to an officers school in Esztergom.

We felt sorry that we had to leave the jail and go back to Nagy-Kereskeny. When we arrived there, there were quite a number of aspirants there, Hungarian boys, about 10 or 12, who had gotten two big rooms with newly made beds with mattresses. We had to return to our room, where the straw-filled sacks were on the floor. We were told that we will be further punished, that we will not be sent to the officers school, as we don't deserve it, but will be sent to the battle front with the next field company, which was just being formed. The other 10 or 12 boys were getting ready to be sent to the officers school. We were not unhappy, since that was the fastest way for us to get away from that place, which was hell. It is unnecessary to say that my patriotism had reached a very low level on account of that kind of treatment.

And so we left on May 7, 1916 for the Russian front. It was a long train ride. We passed Tokai, a place famous for the wine, and many of us got out and bought a bottle of Tokai wine. Then the train took us further east to Munkacs and then north through the Beskid Pass in the Carpathian Mountains to Galicia. The train stopped for a long time in Stryj, where my uncle Martin Sobel and aunt Klara lived. This was the city where Else and Carl were born, and where I spent two months of vacation, when I was

ten years old, exactly eight years ago. I figured that the uncle was probably as a pharmacist in the army, but I sent a messenger into the town with a little letter, telling my aunt that she should come to the train station, if she wanted to see me. She did not come and the train left. She later told me that she had received my letter, but that she could not come to the station. The train continued to Lemberg, and further east to Zablottce, where we got out. From there we marched to the front line, which ran straight from Brody in the north to Tarnopol in the south. We went first to small barracks, which was the reserve position of the regiment. There everyone of us had a place for sleeping, one man next to another one, in two layers. I had to crawl up to the upper layer. It was summer and the weather was nice. We were about half a mile behind the front line.

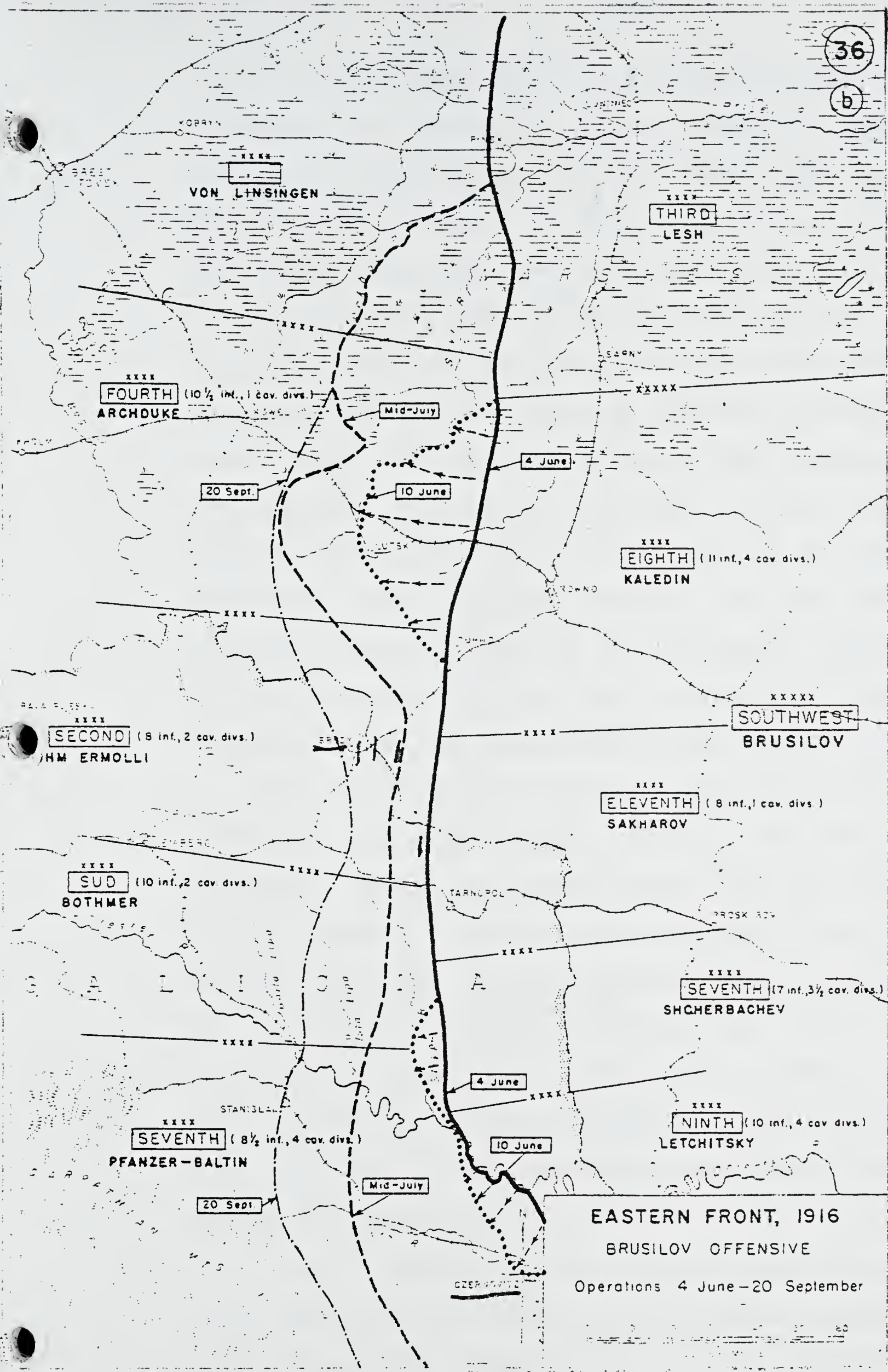
The next day, after our arrival, the coronel, quite an old man, over 60, came to inspect the newly arrived field company. When he came to me, I saluted, standing straight, and said: "Ein-jaehrig-Freiwilliger Adolf Mechner." He looked at me, but did not ask me anything, for instance why I had not gone through an officers school, since I did not have a little white star on my collar. I knew right away that he was informed about us by the captain in Nagy-Kereskeny. I should say misinformed. It did not matter. Our new commanders, the 1st and 2nd lieutenant, and the captain, whose name was Steinitzer, and all the soldiers were very friendly toward us. It was a different bunch of people. By now, I spoke already quite well Hungarian and sang with them the Hungarian songs. It was a relatively quiet part of the front, stationary for months. Artillery fire was quite rare, but at night there was constant infantry fire.

But we were in a relatively safe place, behind a little hill. Very soon, I was full of lice.

About a week later, we went into the front line, that means into the trenches, and the troops which had been there came into the reserve, our barracks. That was the usual thing, that such changes were made every three weeks. A completely different life began for us. The trenches were just deep enough that a man, standing straight, was fully protected against rifle fire, except for the place where he had to put his rifle in order to shoot, where there was a little less soil. The walls of the trenches were strengthened by a kind of wickerwork, held up by posts ~~by posts~~, which were rammed vertically into the ground. This required, of course, constant repair. Things got bad when it rained. Then we often had to stand in mud. What I did not mention was that we all had high boots, which gave us much protection. The trenches were wide enough that people could pass easily behind a man who was leaning against the front wall of the trench. The distance from one man to the next one was about $1\frac{1}{2}$ to 2 yards. The front line did not ^{run} in a straight line, but rather in a zig-zag, each branch about 15 to 20 yards long, so that the tip of the zig-zag line was nearer to the enemy line. This was important for the defense, allowing flanking attacks or defense. A few more details: There was usually a second trench line parallel to the front line, some 10 to 20 yards behind, connected by running trenches with each other, of importance in case the enemy succeeded in an attack and invaded the first line. This second line was, in hilly terrain, a little higher up on the hill for easier defense. Another important detail was that the trenches did not

run in straight lines, but were interrupted every 8 - 10 yards by a higher mass of earth, and the trench ran in a U-shaped form behind that hill, which was only 5 - 6 feet wide. This hill was important, as it offered protection against artillery attacks coming from the side, and especially against shrapnells and hand-grenades. Especially bad were the nights, since we had to shoot constantly, and the Russians did the same. It was fear that the enemy may have come out of the trenches and come closer to us. We saw nothing, only the grass against the sky, and that gave the impression that the Russians were coming. In reality it was the grass moving in the wind. But we were not sure, and therefore there was a constant shooting going on from both sides, and an enormous waste of ammunition. That was going on every night. With daylight the front became quiet, and that was the time when we could lie down to sleep, along the trench wall, with the knapsack under the head. I had something special, a little pillow which could be blown up, which I had brought with me from Vienna. It was terribly dirty, but that did not matter, since it was soft. Not everybody was allowed to sleep during the day. There were always some people on guard duty during the day. Once a day they brought ~~they brought~~ food, a thick soup with pieces of meat, beans, potato, and what have you, then a big piece of bread, a piece of sausage, a cup of coffee. That was all for the whole day.

During the day there was more artillery fire, since it was easier to see, where a shrapnell or a grenade went and exploded. The noise, which a shrapnell or grenade made when coming toward us, is difficult to describe. When it flew over our heads, it was a loud, whining noise, getting at first gradually louder



The map shows the Eastern Front and areas, where our company was placed marked with red lines. In mid-July we were stationed more to the East, had then to retreat towards the city of Brody and after a further retreat over a bridge over the river Boldurka I was transported to the railway station Zablotce and then by train to a hospital in Przemysl. The map also shows my hometown Czernewitz, which was re-occupied a few weeks earlier by the Russians in the course of the Brusilov offensive.

and then less loud, and then came the explosion. But it was different with projectiles coming straight toward us. Then the whining noise was almost missing, and we felt the pressure in the air, and we knew that we had to get down within a second to get some protection. That goes for grenades. With shrapnells it was different, since they were shot in such a way that they exploded in the air in front of us over our heads, so that a rain of heavy lead bullets, each the size of a cherry, came down with great force. It could not perforate the helmets, which we were wearing all the time, but otherwise it could cause terrible wounds. There was only a second left to go down to duck behind the trench wall. With the bullets there came also heavy pieces of metal down, the cover of the shrapnell, which could cause terrible injuries. But, as I said, this part of the front was stationary, and we got relatively little artillery fire.

The three weeks on the front line had passed, and we were pulled out and went into the reserve. Life there was in general pleasant. There was a brook nearby, and we could go for a bath when we wanted. There were no airplanes in use at that time, and we never saw one. But the Russians had so-called captive balloons, which were all the time ^{in the air} far behind their lines, in the shape of a Zeppelin balloon, from which they observed us. They must have seen us bathing and one day suddenly a few shrapnells exploded over our heads. They did not aim very well, and nobody was hurt. But we ran away fast.

I got a special mission when we were in reserve: To walk every morning over a hill to the regiment's commando with the regiment's report, which I had to bring to our commander, captain Steinitzer. This was only unpleasant in rainy weather,

otherwise I liked it to walk through the fields, where flowers were in full bloom. Often I found there Russian infantry projectiles on the ground, which I collected in my pocket. They were pointed, whereas the Austrian projectiles were round at the top. Captain Steinitzer often held conferences, in which he discussed the general war situation. Among other things he told us not to take prisoners, but rather to shoot them, even when they were without a rifle with both hands up. He said it was too expensive to take care of prisoners. I came later into such a situation a few times, and did not follow his advice. One day, I was promoted to the degree of Gefreiter, which means lance-corporal, and now I had a little white star on each side of my collar.

Captain Steinitzer found out that I could play on the piano, and from that day on I had to go every evening to his quarters, where he and the other officers, 2nd lieutenant Géza von Táhy, 1st lieutenant Žiža, a Yugoslav, cadet Pesti, and ensign Vid, also a Yugoslav, were assembled and drinking. Captain Steinitzer was a heavy drinker and got drunk every evening. There was a piano and I played for them whatever came to my mind, and they all sang, mostly student songs, popular operetta music, folk songs, etc. It was much fun.

One day, the whole regiment had to move. It was raining all day, and we had to walk with our heavy knapsacks, rifles, small shovels for digging in, bayonets, ammunition, etc. On top of the knapsack was the coat, but this time we had to wear it, and below the knapsack was a rolled-up blanket. We walked from morning till late in the evening, and slept then in an old school building. The officers were riding on horseback, but we

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others had to walk, carrying an enormous load with us.

We were not told where we had to go. Later we found out. Since the beginning of the year, when I was transferred to a regiment in Hungary, I was not anymore informed about the situation in the war. I did not know, for instance, about the terrible battles in France at Verdun, where hundreds of thousands of people lost their lives. Verdun withstood, although almost completely surrounded by the Germans, and was never taken. There was also a great battle on the Somme river, where tanks were used by the English for the first time. They advanced, but did not gain much terrain and had great losses in men.

What we did not know then and what I learned later was that the Russians had launched a great offensive under general Brusilov and had advanced over a front of 300 miles. The Russians took Lutsk on June 8th in the north, and Czernowitz on June 18th in the south, and heavy fighting continued about Kovel, Tarnopol and Baranovici. Tarnopol was the area, where we were. The Russians advanced from 25 to 125 kilometers in that area, and we were retreating. We were moved north to cover the retreat, and had to go into position between Radziwilov and Brody. These two cities were for over 100 years border cities, Radziwilov in Russia, and Brody in Galicia, and the border running from north to south between these two cities. It took the whole next day of marching, till we reached that point. The rain had finally stopped, and in the late afternoon we had to spread out to form a line, and to start digging in. It did not take long and we were not yet deep enough, when the Russians had come closer, and started with ~~with~~ artillery as well as infantry fire. One of my best friends, a fine Jewish boy, from Hungary, whose name I have forgotten, was

one of the first to lose his life. We had to run, and had to leave him behind. After running for about one mile, we had to stop, spread out to form a line and dig in again. Just in that moment, when I was standing there with about 10 or 12 men, a shrapnell exploded about 10 yards above us, and a rain of bullets came down. Many were wounded, but, miraculously, I was not hit. The line was rather thin, as we were about 10 feet apart, and we started to dig in. My hole was about a yard deep when the Russian artillery started to shoot. But our artillery responded and we had quite a number of machine guns also. Each of us was supplied with a great amount of ammunition, and we prepared ourselves for a fierce battle.

Behind our line was a wooden fence, and some of our people had removed some boards of the fence in order to be able to move through. I had not gone through any of the holes in the fence. It was dark anyway, and I was busy digging and deepening my hole. We were ordered to call all the time the name of our company, to make sure that the line was intact. The call came from the right and continued to the left.

Behind us was the city of Brody in flames, so that we were not completely in the dark. It was about midnight, when we started to receive massive artillery fire. We knew that that was the beginning of the attack. And then the Russians started to move. We could see them and we could hear them. They all shouted and ran. It was the first time in my life that my knees shook, and I could not stop the shaking. Their shouting came closer and we all started to shoot. But then, suddenly, when they were in the middle of the field which was between us and them, our artillery started to shoot. The Russian tactic was always to send many lines of men, one after another one, up to 16 lines, forward. It was called the

Russian steamroller. The idea was that the first lines will not reach our lines, but the last lines will come close and overwhelm us. They came very close to me, many of them up to 10 or 15 feet distance from me. But I was a sharpshooter, and each of them received a shot in the head. After being hit, they usually ran a few more feet till they fell, and often I was afraid that one of them would fall over me. Fortunately, they could not run fast in the dark, as there were many people lying on the ground. I also had the advantage of being near the ground, while they were exposed. Behind us, the city of Brody was burning, so that the sky was lighted, and I could see the silhouettes of the men with the handgrenades clearly, and so they were easy targets for me. It was, of course, self defense. Hand grenades are terrible weapons. The recoil of the rifle caused me severe pain in the shoulder, and I had to put a piece of rag into my blouse to lessen the pain. I had to shoot very fast, as they came closer and closer all the time.

Suddenly, I lost contact with the man to my left, and I guessed that the Russians may have broken through. I went for a moment to the back to my commander, lieutenant Žiža, and told him that. He sent me with another man to find out what the trouble was. We went along the wooden fence and saw that many boards of the fence were missing, and there were Russian soldiers standing and shooting. We turned and ran, but they had seen us and turned around and shot. But I was fast and bending forward while I ran, but unfortunately, the other man who was with me got a shot in his shoulder. We went back to our lieutenant, and he sent me with a detachment of a few more people, whom I showed the way, and we all threw handgrenades at the Russians.

There must have been very few, and they were silenced. We then restored our line for the rest of the night.

When I came back to my hole, I saw dimly a man lying there and moving. He said something what I understood meant: "Don't shoot", and he put his hands up and crawled out. I threatened him by holding my rifle towards him, but he had no rifle. This was my first prisoner I had taken, a very young, good-looking boy, whom I took over to my lieutenant, and I went then back to my hole. The attack was in general repulsed, and the rest of the night was quiet.

When daylight started, we saw a terrible picture: Hundreds of dead and wounded lying in front of our line. We stuck out a white flag, and so did the Russians, which meant no shooting, so that we could bring in the wounded. I went out with our Red-Cross men with stretchers, and what we saw is difficult to describe. Besides many dead, great many severely wounded men. The men lying before my hole had all shot wounds in the head. The worst massacre was done by our artillery. One wounded officer made me cry like a child. He had his lower leg hanging on a tendon, and when they put him on the stretcher, I lifted his leg up and put it next to him, and he pointed to a big hole in his coat and that meant that he had also an injury in his abdomen. He was such a good-looking, very tall^{man}, very pale on account of the great loss of blood. Among the wounded and dead were many, who stood up and put both hands up, people, who had been hiding and waiting for the right moment to show that they wanted to be taken prisoner.

The date was the 2nd of August, 1916. Everybody was digging in, making connections from one hole to the next one. We

were all sleepy, since we had not slept at night, and very hungry and weak, since we had not eaten anything the day before.

I was now in a sector more to the right, and there was a two-story building behind me. I went there to go inside, and to my astonishment there was a good piano there on the second floor, and I played a few pieces on it.

Just then, the Russian artillery started to shoot, and it was good that I had gotten out of the house, because they directed the artillery fire at that house, and soon it started to crumble. Just as we moved away in our trenches, which were close to the house, a big piece of the wall fell down, very close to me, and I was struck by a few bricks. I felt a severe pain in the middle of the back, and also in my right knee. We moved away from that house, since there was danger that it would collapse completely with a few more artillery shots.

I moved as well as I could, in severe pain, to my old hole from the night before, where I had my knapsack. I fell soon asleep or rather collapsed. They then brought the food for the day and I ate, the first time after two days.

I noticed that there was very little shooting of our artillery, but much shooting of the Russian artillery and infantry, and we had to stay now all the time in the trenches. The noise was enormous. We expected a second night of an attack by the Russians, and I could see the fear in everybody's face. We got a lot of ammunition. It got dark, and very soon the hell broke loose. Heavy artillery fire and the shouting of thousands of men, the same shouting as the night before. We had no artillery and only a few machine guns. We shot as fast as we could.

A messenger came and I remember his name, Haidinger, and

it was from lieutenant Žiža. The message: All our troops will retreat, but I and a few men, 8 or 10, should stay behind and shoot as much as we could and then surrender. I was flabbergasted, as I saw the end of my life. As soon as he left, I knew what I had to do: To leave also with all the others. The shouting of the Russians was already very close. I did not know where to go, since I had not known the terrain behind our lines. I had to climb soon over a fence, and there, with me, also climbing over the fence, was Haidinger. "Mechner", he said, "you were supposed to stay behind". I said to him: "Nobody has the right to tell me to surrender". And I ran. It was pitch dark, and I ran as fast as I could. I came to a river, and I later found out that it was the Boldurka river. Should I now go to the left or to the right, I asked myself. I decided to run to the right along the river and after a while, to my amazement, I came to a bridge, a wooden bridge. There were a few men there, putting hay on the bridge, and pouring gasoline on it. They called me to hurry, and there came a few more people, and in the next moment the bridge was on fire. What enormous luck I had. ⊗

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We came into a village, and there were thousands of men, shouting their regiments numbers. I found a few people of my regiment, and we walked together. I had severe pains in my back and I was almost certain that I had there a broken bone. And my right knee was hurting too, and I was limping. I was so weak and exhausted that I had to lie down at the edge of a road to sleep, and the others did the same. By daybreak we moved on, and soon found a few more people of our regiment.

But the pain was intense, and I was looking for a health station, and finally found one. I was examined and was told

⊗ This was one of the smartest things I had done in my life - I was 19 years old - to disobey an order of a military commander. One of the worst sins. To become a Russian prisoner seemed unacceptable to me. The Russians were known not to take prisoners, to prefer to shoot them instead. That was much simpler for them. I made my decision fast. The Russians were very near already, their voices had become louder. Our artillery was gone and our machine guns had stopped shooting a few minutes before. So, I knew that everybody was running. So, I went too. The Russians may have been 20 feet behind me and I had to run very fast. There were none of our people next to me. When I came to the river, I had to decide fast whether to go right or left. I decided right and it happened to be good. There was the bridge and I got there one or two minutes before they started to put it on fire. All luck!

As a Russian prisoner, if they would not have shot me right away, I would have been sent to Siberia, would have starved to death or frozen to death. It was 1916 and the war ended in 1918. In 1917 the Russian revolution had started. Many Austrian prisoners had been sent back to Austria after the signing of an armistice. If I would still have been alive then, I would have been sent back to Austria. So, I had made the right choice at the right moment at the right place.

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that I had to go to a hospital. I was put on a horse-drawn vehicle, together with a few other people. It was a long ride to the railway station Zablotce. I was sleeping all the time, and when I was put on a railway car, I soon fell asleep again. There was a man in the car, which, by the way, was a cattle wagon, who was supposed to take care of the wounded. That he was a thief, I found out when we finally arrived in a hospital in Przemyśl. My knapsack was almost empty, and I had a few nice things like a good pocket knife and other things, which were not there anymore.

When I arrived there, I told them that my regiment was the Infanterie Regiment No.83. I had had enough of the Infanterie Regiment No.19. I was examined quite thoroughly, repeatedly X-rayed, and no fracture was found. In the knee it was only a severe sprain. The back pains became less severe, and after about a week they were practically gone.

I was told by people who shared the room with me that I often cried and yelled out of my sleep. I believed them, since I was aware that I had bad dreams, which often woke me up. It was always the yelling and shouting of the Russians, when they started an attack. Perhaps they had shouted "hurrah" or a similar word, but it was nerve-racking and made my knees shake. It was a terrible experience and came every night back as a dream, also the humming and whining noise of the grenades, ending with an explosion, which woke me up and made me yell. The doctor who treated me called it a neurosis or something like that, and I received pills for the night, which did not help. Since that was not serious enough to keep me in the hospital, where they needed beds for more serious cases, I was released from

the hospital after about 10 days, and sent back to my regiment No. 83 in Vienna, with a recommendation for further treatment of my neurosis in a convalescent home.

I was happy and so were my people at home, when they saw me, my mother, Else, Walter, and all the others. My dear uncle Imre had died in the meantime. I had a most pleasant life then for a few months at home. Twice a week, I had to go for a cold water treatment, which consisted of a warm shower, a luke-warm tub bath to which cold water was gradually added, and then a cold shower. At the end, an ice-cold ^{wet} linnen sheet was wrapped around me, I had to lie down, and was covered with blankets and had to rest for one hour. This was done twice a week and continued for 4 months. I enjoyed the treatments very much, although I really did not need them. The bad dreams continued for years. I enjoyed being in Vienna. I went to museums, to libraries, to the opera, to shows, to concerts, read a lot, visited aunt Gusta and cousin Isa, who lived now in the same house in Margarethenstrasse 50, also aunt Rosa and Alice, who had moved to another apartment in the Lederergasse in the 8th district.

Else had her little apartment also in the same house where my mother lived, and I saw her very often. Her fiancée Franz Lang and his parents also lived in that house. Else was always very religious, and had converted in 1915 to Lutheranism. She went often on Sundays to church, and loved the sermons and lectures of the pastor. I went once or twice with her, but was not very impressed.

I had not mentioned yet that my mother was often ill, had suffered from gallstones. For many years, when I was still a little boy, she had severe gallstone attacks, usually accompa-



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nied by yellow jaundice. Over the years, she had undergone many kinds of treatment and once, before she married my stepfather, she went to the spa Karlsbad in Bohemia for a few weeks. During the war, while in Vienna, in 1916, she took courage and underwent a gallbladder operation at the clinic Hochenegg. The gallbladder and about 80 stones were removed, a few big ones, and she recuperated nicely.

On the war front, there were many changes in the meantime. On the Italian front, there were another 5 offensives on the Isonzo, the 5th on February 15th to March 17th, the 6th on August 6th to 17th, the 7th on September 14th to 18th, the 8th on October 9th to 12th, and the 9th on October 31st to November 4th, all terrible battles with severe artillery bombardment, which was called drum-fire, but all without substantial change.

On August 27th, 1916, Rumania declared war on Austria-Hungary, and began the invasion of Transylvania, occupying Kronstadt and Hermannstadt. But soon the situation changed, and Austrian and German forces ^{invaded} Rumania, and the capital Bucharest fell on December 6th. The Rumanian government had moved to Jassy. There were further advances and soon most of Rumania was occupied.

The emperor Franz Joseph I. had died on November 21st, and was succeeded by his grandnephew Carl. I remember that I went late in the evening to see the coffin passing through the Mariahilferstrasse, being taken to the Hofburg. Great many people were standing there, many of them crying. He was the monarch for 68 years.

Toward the end of the year 1916, president Wilson, who was just re-elected, tried to intervene, and proposed to both warring

sides "peace without victory". Negotiations went on for weeks, proposals and counter-proposals. The Germans felt that they were in a relatively better strategic position since the collapse of Rumania, and made proposals which were difficult to accept. Negotiations continued into 1917, when, on January 8, the Germans decided that unrestricted submarine war would be the only method by which England could be brought to her knees, and the war won. President Wilson was already under pressure, since the Germans had sunk the Lusitania off the coast of Ireland, with the loss of 1198 lives, including 139 Americans, on May 7, 1915. The sinking of the Lusitania had brought the United States and Germany to the verge of war. Now the United States was notified by Germany that unrestricted submarine war would start on February 1st, 1917. The United States severed relations with the German government. Soon American ships were in fact sunk during February and March, 1917. after the sinking of the big liner 'Lusitania'. On April 6th the United States declared war on Germany. War was not declared on Austria-Hungary until December 7, 1917.

As to myself, my treatment was ended, and on December 16, 1916 I returned to my regiment in the 21st district of Vienna. On January 2, 1917, I was sent for 3 months to the officers school in Bruck-Kiralyhida, which was in Hungary, near Pressburg, and not far from Vienna.

It was a severe winter, and training was very strenuous. We were over 100 boys, most of them from Vienna, and we all took the treatment in stride. At 9 o'clock, everybody had to be in bed, and the lights were turned off. Then we all started to sing, and that went on for a long time. We needed the sleep, since we had to get up at 5 and stand in closed ranks at 6 o'clock. In that one hour we had to get dressed, wash up - which was usually impos-

sible, since the water was frozen - have the breakfast, and put the bed in order. About that they were especially strict. We marched out singing, when it was still dark, to the exercise field. The exercises were extremely strenuous and continued for hours. They started with movements of the head, and arms and legs, turning of the body, and combinations of all these movements, kneeling, lying down in the snow, all kinds of exercises with the rifle, swinging it up with both hands, and at the same time spreading the legs apart, and, of course, in the end running for long stretches. There was usually a pause for 10 or 15 minutes, and then the exercises started again. That went on till noon-time, when we finally marched back to our barracks for the lunch. There was one hour rest in the afternoon, when everybody had to keep quiet. Then classes started, and we had to sit and listen to lectures about military matters. Then came dinner around 6 o'clock, and afterwards we were free to do whatever we wanted, read, play chess or card games, etc. At 9 o'clock, we had to be again in bed.

On Saturday afternoon, we were allowed to leave and take the train for Vienna, and then we were really happy, when we could get home and see our loved ones. But on Sunday night, we had to be back at 9 o'clock and in bed. I had to take the street car No.13 in Vienna, to get to the Ostbahnhof, and I usually left the house at 5 o'clock.

One Sunday, I had bad luck. There was much snow in the streets and the streetcar No.13 did not come. I waited over one hour, till it finally came. I just made it to the train station, but there was no time to buy the ticket. The man at the door could have let me go through without the ticket, since I could have

paid for the fair the conductor in the train. But he was stubborn, and I had to stand there and see the train leave. I had to wait now 2 hours or so for the next train, and I knew that I would arrive late, exactly at 9 o'clock. I had to run a long way from the train station to the barracks, and while I was running, I heard the bugler blow his horn, what meant that it was 9 o'clock. When I arrived at the barracks, the sargent had just finished the inspection, and had, of course, noticed that I was not in bed. I explained to him the mishap with the streetcar, but to no avail. He put me on the list, and I had to appear the next morning for rapport. I explained to the captain that I had waited for over an hour for the streetcar, and on account of that had missed the train. Nothing helped; I was punished with withdrawal of the privilege to go to Vienna for one weekend, or perhaps two, I don't remember anymore, which was a hard punishment.

At that time, my rheumatic pains had gotten very bad, and I had especially bad pains in my feet. The winter was very severe. I went for a medical examination, and the doctor put me for two weeks in the hospital. That helped and the swelling of the feet subsided. On March 31st, the course in the officers school ended, and we all went back to our company in Vienna. On April 16th, I advanced to the rank of Corporal, which meant that I had now 2 white stars on each side of my collar.

But at the same time, I was transferred to another regiment, the Infanterie Regiment No. 78 in Osijek in Slavonia, which is now a part of Yugoslavia. It was a long ride by train. When I arrived there, I soon asked for permission to go for four weeks to Vienna to finish my studies in school, since I still had not finished my 8th year in the gymnasium. There was no dif-

difficulty, since that was contained in a regiments command order, and had to be given to petitioners. So, I received the permission, and on May 21st went back to Vienna for 4 weeks. I attended classes in the Sophiengymnasium in the Circusgasse, and at the end received not only a certificate that I had successfully terminated the 8th class, but also ^{had passed} the matura examination. That was a great thing, since the matura examination was very difficult in previous years, and a horror for all the students. That meant that I was now entitled to enter a University and become an "Academician", as it is called in Russian. Living again for one month in Vienna was a great pleasure. But on the 28th of May, I had again to say "good-bye" and leave for Osijek. I had to learn now again another language, Yugoslavian, or as it was called at that time, Croatian.

I had stayed there only one month, when I was again put in a field company, to be sent to the Italian front, and transferred to the Infanterie Regiment No. 96. One day before, I was advanced to the rank of Zugsfuehrer, which meant file-leader, and I had now 3 little white stars on each side of my collar.

The train took us through Zagreb into Krain (Carniola), and we were for a while in Kranj (Krainburg). The language which the people spoke there was Slovenian, which was quite different from Croatian, which I had just started to learn. We did not stay in one place, and every few days we changed our location. The longest time we stayed in Rakek, which was to the north of the port of Trieste. For about two months, I was instructor of a cadet-aspirant course. On September 17th, I received the Bronze-Medal for Bravery for service on the Russian front.

I had at that time trouble with a tooth, which I had broken on a hard piece of bread, and was sent to a dental laboratory,

which was in Postoina. This was a famous place. The German name was Adelsberg, and the Italian name Posthumia, and there was the famous Adelsberger cave, the biggest in Europe. I went there about twice a week for dental treatment, by train, and each time I visited the cave, together with hundreds of people. The visit took about two hours. The cave was also famous for another reason. A river disappeared there near the entrance to the cave, and went underground. Nobody knew at that time where it re-appeared. There were many rivers in the Karst mountains which were like that. It took a long time after the war to find out the exact place where rivers that have gone underground re-appeared. This was done by putting great amounts of paint into the water. Anyway, I visited the Adelsberger cave all together about 10 times. Our company went on October 14th to the Isonzo front near Gorizia.

At this point, I should describe some important happenings in the general war. There was not much change on the Western front. But the unrestricted submarine war had caused great losses. By October 1917, the Germans had destroyed 8 million tons of shipping. But the British had gradually learned how to counteract, first by a convoy system, and then by the use of great numbers of destroyers and submarine chasers, also by intensifying the ship building, so that by the beginning of 1918 the Allies were building more new tonnage than was being destroyed. The German gamble on the submarine had failed. On the Russian front there was some advance of the Russians, but in July the Germans and Austrians drove the Russians back, and retook Tarnopol and Czernowitz on August 3.

In Russia, the revolution had started, first with mutinies

of the troops in the capital, and then by assuming of power by Alexander Kerensky on March 12th. Tsar Nicholas abdicated on March 15th, 1917. On April 16th, Lenin and other Bolshevik leaders arrived in Petrograd, having been transported from Switzerland through Germany in a sealed carriage, the German high command having calculated that these extremists would soon undermine the pro-Allied provisional government. The war went on, since the provisional government did not want to make a separate peace agreement. Trotsky had also arrived from the United States and supported Lenin. Kerensky became minister of war, and undertook to revive the war spirit. He even went to the front and ordered a Russian offensive. But the offensive collapsed. The situation became precarious, and the Bolshevik influence made rapid headway. On November 6th, the Bolshevik revolution started, the troops mutinied, and the members of the provisional government were arrested. Kerensky managed to escape and went into hiding and later into exile.

On the Italian front the 10th Isonzo offensive May 12 to June 8, 1917 was again unsuccessful, and so was the 11th on August 17 to September 12.

Now back to me. My company arrived on the Isonzo front on October 14th, 1917. It was a stationery front for a long time with well-built trenches, repaired each time after an Italian bombardment. There were caverns deep underground, where the troops were hiding during the bombardments, with good bunks for sleeping. Everybody could sleep at night, since there were constantly men outside on guard duty.

The German general Ludendorff had in the meantime decided to follow the annihilation of Serbia and Rumania with a similar

assault on Italy. Six divisions of German troops were sent to re-inforce the Austrian troops on the Isonzo front. The offensive started on October 24th, 1917, near Caporetto on the upper Isonzo. This was later called the 12th Isonzo battle. The Italians were unprepared and fell back. It was a complete breakthrough, and in 3 days the Tagliamento river was reached, and the Italians lost 300,000 men as prisoners, and even more than that in deserters. The entire Italian front to the south retreated. Our company, which was entrenched in the Ternowaner Woods north of Gorizia, was ordered to advance.

It was late at night, and we had to leave the trenches. But the terrain between our and the Italian lines was a deep valley, full of obstacles. Each man was equipped with pliers, and the most difficult task was to cut the enormous amounts of barbed wires, which were in front of our lines. After opening a few passage ways, groups of our company could advance. But there were many other obstacles. The terrain was soft and steep. The Ternowaner Woods were not anymore woods. There were only trunks of trees, which had remained, and many dry branches were lying on the ground, over which we had to climb. There were also artillery shells, some enormous ones, almost one yard in length, which had failed to explode, so-called "duds", and we had to be careful not to step on them or even touch them. Coming down to the deepest part of the valley, there was a lot of mud from previous rains. Then we had to climb up-hill, and there were the same obstacles, trunks and branches of trees, masses of barbed wires, which had to be cut in order to make passage ways, till we finally got into the Italian trenches. There was no shooting, since the Italians had evacuated their

The map shows the Italian frontline before the 12th Isonzo battle, marked in black and red to the right. It started at Capretto in the north, red. I was positioned at Gorizia also red underlined. From there we advanced to Cormons, then to Palmanova, then to the Tagliamento River, the Livenza River through Portogruaro, and finally to the Piave River, where the little red line marks the area, where the island Grave di Papadopoli is. The Austrian troops advanced to the Piave River, occupying there the whole area between the two red lines, and shortening the front greatly. You can see nearby the city of Venice, red, and also red underlined is the city of Udine, where I was put in hospital, after I was wounded, and then sent from there to Petta Austria. Also underlined red is the name Adelsberg, where the famous grotto is, which is now in Yugoslavia and called Postojna.

troops many hours before. Advancing became easier then and especially after daybreak, when we saw where we were. There were good roads and we could advance faster, although with some precaution, as there was always the danger of getting into a trap. We passed many villages and found enormous depots of food, and since we were hungry, not only on that day, but for many months before, we had a few good meals on that day, and also the following ones. There were also great supplies of wine, and our officers had to be strict to prevent our people from getting drunk. There were many kinds of hard cheeses, which some of the soldiers rolled on the ground like wheels, while walking, since they were too heavy to carry. I had cut a big piece of a good cheese, and put it into my knapsack, and I had this supply for many weeks.

We marched all day and in the evening we reached the city of Palmanova. It was a walled city, and we entered through an enormous door into a kind of hallway, where enormous barrels of wine were standing. Passing another big door, we came now into the streets of the city. The houses there must have been evacuated one or two hours before we got there. In almost all of them there was a staircase or a door on fire, started by retreating Italian troops, who wanted to burn down the city. I was the first man of our troops to enter this city, and I started to put out the fires and ordered my men to do the same. We found pales and it was relatively easy to put the fires out. Troops which arrived shortly after us did the same thing, and in that way almost the entire city could be saved from burning down. I went up the staircases in two or three houses. There were bedrooms, where one could see that the people had just crawled out of their beds. All the wardrobes were filled with cloths, and chests of

drawers with linnen. I took a quick look, whether there was any jewelry or camera, but could not see any. In this city, we found also great supplies of food, cookies, candies, bread, fruits, cheeses, etc. We stayed there over night. The next day, our advance continued.

We crossed the Tagliamento river. We did not go through Udine. I remember the names of two cities, through which we passed: Portogruaro and Motta di Livenza. We finally reached the Piave river, and the village there was Cimadolmo. Across the river was Treviso, but it was a few miles away from the river, and we could not see it. There was a dam along the Piave, which gave us good protection.

We did not advance beyond the Piave river. In that area, where our regiment was stationed, the Piave river separated into two branches, and rejoined further down, so that an island was formed, about 4 kilometer in length and one kilometer in width.* During the day, we stayed behind the dam, well protected, but at night we went over to the island over small pontoon bridges, and dug in there. We could not dig very deep, since we soon reached water. Instead, we heaped soil and sand in front of the trenches, and in that way got some protection. We even built some low caverns. There were a few small houses on the island, and I and others carried at night some beams and boards from these houses, which we put in front of the trenches and covered them with soil and sand and branches from trees, so that we had some little rooms, into which we could crawl. We were supplied with charcoal, which we put into old steel-helmets, to heat our coffee and sausage. Twice, I did something stupid: Since it was winter and quite cold, I used the charcoal for heating of my little hole,

* The name of the island was: Grave di Papadopoli.

(To be inserted on the opposite page, where there is a mark X)

It was, in general, a more quiet sector of the front. Sometimes we got artillery fire at night, usually in four bursts, fired from four guns, covering a small area, and, of course, frequent rifle fire. We retaliated rarely, as we had a shortage of ammunition. The Italians had also positions on the island, and their trenches were quite close to ours, and they also pulled their troops out at day-break, the same as we did. I was, of course, not supposed to lie down and sleep, and I knew later that it was the carbon monoxide which had made me sleepy.

and also hung a piece of material over the entrance to the hole. So, I had it nice and warm, and I lied down and fell asleep. Luckily, I woke up and crawled out, but fell unconscious to the ground. How long I was lying there, I don't know. I did the same thing a few days later again, and exactly the same thing happened again. I did not know then about carbon monoxide poisoning. I found out the hard way, that it was very wrong to do that. I could have died there, and twice something like a miracle happened, that I woke up and crawled out of the hole. Before daybreak, we all went back to the other side of the river to sleep, under cover of the dam. I remember the name of the island: Grave di Papadopoli.

X Every three weeks, we were pulled out of the frontline and went into the village of Cimadolmo, where I got a nice room in a house, where a large Italian family lived. They were very nice towards me, offered me often polenta and other nice things to eat.

On January 1st, 1918, I was nominated to the rank of Faehnrich, in English, "ensign". I had now a golden lace at the edge of my collar and a golden star, and the rank of an officer. I had now a room in the house, where I slept, all for myself, and a man to keep my things in order, clean my shoes, etc., a so-called "putz". Instead of a rifle, I had a revolver. On my cap, I had a golden cockade.

My putz was a very handsome and intelligent fellow. His name was Stojnić, and he was from Bosnia. I had brought a book with me from Vienna, a Hrvatski riječnik (Croatian reading book) and I spoke the language already quite fluently. I had undertaken to teach Stojnić, who was an illiterate, to read and write his language, and within a few months he was able to read and write.

On April 26th. I received another medal, the Karl Truppen Kreuz, (Charles Troup Cross). Our emperor was Carl I., whom I saw once, when he inspected the troupes on the front. I sometimes went on excursions with my commander, lieutenant 2nd class Jandrilovič, on the island in daytime, with all precautions, of course. We went through bushes to the edge of the water, where we could jump into a hole, and observe with binoculars the Italians on the other side of the river. Our captain got now the idea of naming me observation officer, gave me a very fine ^{pair of} binoculars, and I had to climb up on a ladder with another man to an observation post on a high tree. I had to keep exact records of all the things I observed on the other side, any movement of the troops there, had also to count the number of detonations of the enemy artillery. That went on for many days. It was quite an important job, since the Austrian army was planning a large offensive in the near future. I had found out with my binoculars that, one day, new troops had arrived there, with very unusual brown uniforms, and I suspected that these could be American troops, and I reported it. I saw the other troops leave, and the newcomers take their positions.

Our offensive was well planned, and a few German divisions had already arrived. On a certain day, at a certain hour, our artillery fire would start and last for two hours, then our troops would cross the river in small boats and land on the other side, while our artillery fire would be directed into an area farther away. It should have been a decisive offensive, and it was planned to advance to the Po river, at least, and perhaps deeper.

About two days before the offensive should have started,

Identitätskarte Nr. 2407

Charge: Konig, Fritz, Lt. Inf.

Name: Hechner Adolf

Truppe K.u.k. Infanterieregiment Nr. 83

(Anstalt usw.): Einjährig-freiwilligen-Anstellung

Wien, am 4. pr. 1917 191

Unterschrift des Inhabers: _____

Stempel: _____

Aussteller: Hechner

K. u. k. Inf. Reg. 83

PVB. Nr. 155 1317

Charge, Name Hechner Adolf 1910-309

Truppenkörper I. R. 83

Br. 1. kl. Tapferkeitsmedaille

Klasse _____

Legitimation für Tapferkeitsmedaillen.

Unterabteilungskommandant. _____

K. u. k. Inf. Reg. 83

PVB. Nr. 155 1317

Charge, Name Hechner Adolf 1910-309

Truppenkörper I. R. 83

Br. 1. kl. Tapferkeitsmedaille

Klasse _____

Legitimation für Tapferkeitsmedaillen.

Unterabteilungskommandant. _____

K. U. K. INFT.-REGMT. Nr. 78.

Sep.-Bef. Nr. 6 vom 24. 1918

Charge, Name Hechner Adolf

Standeskörper I. R. 83

Diensteseinteilung Einjährig-freiwilligen-Anstellung

KTK. _____

Legitimation für Besitzer des KTK.

3 so-called legitimations (documents of proof) of decorations, which I received for bravery on the front.
 1. The bronze-medal for bravery; 2. The silver-medal first class for bravery (grosse Silberne); 3. The Karl-Truppenkreuz.

one officer of the Austrian army, of Czech nationality, had swam over to the Italian side, and had given all the information of our plan to the Italian command.

On May 31st, 1918, I was on my observation post on the tree, together with the other man, when a rifle shot passed close to us, fired from the Italian side. We knew that we had been discovered, and went, as fast as we could, down the ladder, while a second shot passed by. When we were down on the ground, we moved away from the tree, and could not be seen by them anymore on account of high bushes. Nevertheless, a third shot was fired, while we were standing there and writing down some of our observations. Unfortunately, this shot hit both of us, going through my hand, which was holding the pencil, and then going into the shoulder of the other man. This was 3 or 4 days before the offensive should have started.

We went back to the mainland, where the sanitation officer was already waiting for us, had prepared a wooden splint for my hand, and bandaged me nicely. The projectile had entered the back of my hand between the 3rd and 4th metacarpal bones, and exited in the 1st digital interspace between the thumb and the index finger. Miraculously, the bones were not hit, and neither important tendons nor nerves, arteries, or veins. The other man was more seriously wounded, and was bleeding heavily.

I wanted to remain on the front, wanted to participate in the planned offensive, and begged my captain to let me stay there, but to no avail. I was sent to a hospital in Udine for one or two days, and from there to the Hinterland to a hospital in Pettau, in Austria.

I was very lucky that I was wounded. I heard later that



Adolph 1918

the offensive was a complete fiasco, due to the treachery by that Czech officer, and the disclosure of our plans. These plans were not changed, after it was noticed that this Czech officer was gone, and so our troops went into a trap. The Italian troops had evacuated the trenches on the Piave river and also the territory behind to a depth of a few miles, so that our artillery fire had no effect. When our boats were in the middle of the Piave river, they were hit by a rain of heavy artillery fire, and the troops, which landed on the other side of the river, found no resistance, but were then exposed to an enormous barrage of artillery fire, and then to a heavy attack by great forces of infantry. They were decimated and most of them captured. Only very few could save themselves by retreating in boats over the river. The Austrians had lost 100,000 men in that offensive. I was very lucky again, as so often before in that war.

The wound healed nicely, without any infection. I had received, of course, a tetanus serum injection. I shared the room in the hospital with another officer, who had very good books, and I read some of them also, read all day long. One day, I looked at the map and found that not far from Pettau was the spa Rohitsch. I knew that the girl Mitzi Klein and her family lived there, sent there by the refugee organization from Vienna, and I had their address. Next day, without asking the commander of the hospital for permission, I went to the train station, and took a train for Rohitsch. Their surprise was great, when they saw me. Mitzi Klein was the girl with whom I was in love as a young boy, a few years back. I had written to her once or twice while I was in the army. I spent a nice day there with her and her family. But in the evening, I took the train back to Pettau.

The commander of the hospital took my disappearance seriously, but there were no further consequences.

After one month in the hospital, I was sent back to my regiment No.78 in Osijek. On July 18th, 1918, I received the Silver Medal 1st Class, called the "Grosse Silberne", for bravery on the Italian front. This was announced in the division command report and sent to my regiment. I was quite proud, since that was quite a high decoration. Besides that, I was entitled to the wound medal with 2 stripes, since I was twice wounded, first in Russia and now in Italy. I had now four medals on my blouse.

× Shortly after I arrived at my regiment, I received a furlough of 14 days plus 4 days for travelling, from the 16th of July to the 12th of August, 1918, and I went to Vienna. My mother and Walter were not there anymore, had returned to Czernowitz. But Else was there, already married, and had a studio apartment in the Wiedener Hauptstrasse in the 4th district. Things were not good in Vienna, there was little to eat, and war weariness.

Back in Osijek, I was sent to the Infanterie Regiment No.96 in Karlovac. I was there only one month when an announcement came that students who wanted to go to a University could get a furlough for half a year. I filled out papers right away, and soon I received a favorable answer. I left at the end of September for Vienna, where Else joined me for the trip to Czernowitz. Her marriage with Franzi Lang had gotten into difficulties. She wanted a divorce. I remember that she received many very long letters from him, in which he begged her to come back to him. She never went.

... How wonderful it was to be at home again with my loved ones! With our dear Mama, Walter, Else. On November 1st, while in Czernowitz, I was notified that I had been advanced to the rank of lieutenant, retroactive from August 1st, 1918. I now had a golden star on my collar. Shortly afterwards, the war came to an inglorious end.

How lucky I was that I had been sent home shortly before the end of the war! I was at home when the news came about the collapse of the German army, about revolutions in Berlin, Vienna and Budapest, the disintegration of the Austria-Hungarian monarchy and the formation of an autonomous Tchechoslovakia, Hungary, Yugoslavia, the abdication of the German Kaiser, and Kaiser Carl of Austria-Hungary, of King Ferdinand of Bulgaria, and king Nikita of Montenegro. Communications by railroad were not functioning and often interrupted, and it was difficult for the soldiers of the German and Austrian armies to leave for home from far away areas like Greece, Yugoslavia, or the Ukraine and especially for officers, who were subjected to attacks and brutal treatment while on the way for home. These were things about which we read often in newspapers, and that is why I say that I was lucky that I was at home, when the war had come to an end.

This was a turning point in my life, in many respects. It was not only the leaving of the army, the taking off of my uniform, the coming home and to civilian life. It was also a turning point in my way of thinking, in my way of looking at the world and at my life. Everything was different now, and I became suddenly a different person too.

When I had entered the army in Vienna in 1915, I was 18 years old, an adolescent, almost a child. I did not have to make decisions, I had to obey decisions and orders of others,

of the army and that I had done for 3 years. It had meant accepting indoctrination, brain-washing, privation, humiliation, maltreatment, sometimes resembling torture, like by the Hungarians, without questioning or resistance. That was my attitude then and remained so during the entire war - except when I disobeyed the order by my lieutenant to surrender to the Russians in the middle of the battle. I knew then that it was a question of giving up my life or saving my life. Otherwise I always obeyed orders, had learnt to do what others wanted me to do, had given up thinking what was good for me, accepting things as they were and as they came.

But now, as the war had come to an end and I had taken off my uniform, I had to make decisions, had to think about my future. Now, I wanted to study and I registered immediately with the University of Czernowitz at the philosophic faculty, and getting deeper into it I came to the conclusion that medicine would be the best field for me. I never before had thought of it and certainly not while I was in the army. My interest in the sciences became insatiable and I attended classes at the University from early in the morning till late in the evening.

Now I was not anymore an adolescent, I had matured, had become a man, with my own ideas, who had to make my own decisions, painful in a certain way, as it meant leaving again my home and my loved ones, but that part was overcome by my ambition, my desire to do something important for myself, for my future.

My hometown was so different now. Life had returned to it, some of the old stores had opened again, there was some traffic, mostly by trucks and delapidated cars, there were

my life for them? How happy was I now, to be at home again, to be with my loved ones!

At the beginning of 1918, since the collapse of Russia, Serbia, and Rumania, there was war-weariness in every country. Even in France, where cabinets frequently fell and were followed by others in quite rapid succession, as there was dissatisfaction and the drive toward peace. Only when the great Clemenceau took over, the situation changed, and the drive for victory started. In Austria-Hungary was the same situation and much instability, due especially to starvation, caused by the blockade. In Germany, there was also growing unrest, and gradually the Socialists got the upper hand, and the German Kaiser Wilhelm II. had to agree to certain pronouncements of the Socialists. The Pope put forward an outline of a peace agreement, but the German government was unready to make any concessions. On January 8th, 1918, president Wilson had outlined a peace program, consisting of 14 points, but the Germans still resisted, and saw chances of winning the war. They organized a great offensive on the westfront, which started on March 21, 1918, and broke through the British lines, but advanced only about 40 miles. It came to an end on April 5th. General Foch was named commander and could bring the offensive to a halt. General Ludendorff attacked a few times more in big offensives, the last one on the Marne, which they again crossed, but general Foch ordered a counter-attack with strong French and American forces, and the Germans were driven back. The French, British, and American forces advanced continuously, after a few sharp battles at Amiens, Arras, in the Argonne, and at Ypres. On October 27th, General Ludendorff resigned and the German troops

other faces, very few of the old ones in our neighborhood, Mr. Tomaszczuk for instance, the owner of the neighboring house, now with a gray beard. I met my former gym teacher, professor Lissner, in the street, hardly recognized him, since he had now a little beard; he was extremely happy to see me again.

There were the old newspapers again in Czernowitz and I was reading them avidly to find out what was going on in the world. There was upheaval in Germany, mutiny in the port of Kiel, revolution in Munich, after the king of Bavaria abdicated. On November 9th the German emperor abdicated and fled to Holland and the Socialist leader Scheidemann proclaimed the German Republic. The German armistice commission, headed by Mathias Erzberger was received by general Foch in his railway coach near Compiegne. The armistice provided for the immediate evacuation of occupied territory on the west front and of all territory west of the Rhine, which was to be occupied by the Allied forces. The treaties of Brest-Litovsk and Bucharest were to be renounced and German troops were to be withdrawn from Rumania, Austria-Hungary, Turkey, and eventually Russia. Germany was to surrender 5000 locomotives and 150.000 freight cars. She was to turn over 160 submarines, and a large number of other warships. The armistice, harsh though the terms were, had to be accepted. It was concluded for a period of 30 days, but was periodically renewed until peace was signed. On November 11th at 11 A.M. hostilities ceased on the West Front. The Allies at once began to take over the occupied and western German territories. The last German troops crossed the frontier of France on November 18th and the frontier of Belgium on No-

vember 26th. French troops occupied Strassburg on November 25th, while British and American troops began the occupation of Germany. The Peace Conference was formally opened at Paris on January 18th, 1919, with 70 delegates representing 27 of the victorious powers. The Germans were excluded until the terms were ready for submission. President Wilson, received with the wildest enthusiasm when he arrived in Europe in Mid-December, represented the new idealism in international relations and was intent primarily on securing the adoption of a plan for a League of Nations, to be included in the peace treaty. Lloyd George, the chief representative of Great Britain and the empire was more or less disposed to make a moderate peace, but was deeply committed by promises made in the general election recently held, to the effect that the war criminals would be brought to justice and that Germany would be made to pay for the war. Clemenceau, in turn, was frankly the exponent of the old diplomacy, being intent on revenge on the interests of France. Both England and France were bound further by their agreements with Italy, by commitments to the Near East, etc. The Italian prime minister, Orlando played a secondary role, but the foreign minister, Sonnino, stood forth as an unbending champion of Italian claims against Austria and against the new Yugoslav state.

Here it is appropriate to describe what had happened on the Italian front. On October 24th, the Italians attacked on the entire front and the Austrian army collapsed on the Piave river completely. The Italians advanced to Vittorio Veneto (Oct. 30th), by which time the Austrian armies were in a state of dissolution several hundred thousand being captured and the remainder streaming back toward home. The Italians took Trieste and Fiume. The Austrians offered on Oct. 29th to surrender unconditionally to

Italians. On November 3 an armistice was concluded between the Allied Powers and Austria-Hungary; complete demobilization of the armies and withdrawal of troops fighting with the Germans; surrender of half the equipment, evacuation of territories still occupied; Allied occupation of strategic points; surrender of the fleet, etc.

On November 7th, the revolution broke out in Munich, and on November 9th, Prince Max of Baden announced in Berlin the abdication of Emperor Wilhelm II., who followed the advice of general Hindenburg and fled to Holland. Scheidemann, the Socialist leader, proclaimed the German Republic. On November 8th, the German armistice commission, headed by Matthias Erzberger, the leader of the Center Party, was received by general Foch in his railway coach near Compiegne, to sign the armistice agreement. On November 11th, hostilities ceased on the West Front. The last German troops crossed the frontier of France on November 18th, and of Belgium on November 26th. French troops occupied Strasbourg on November 25th, while British and American troops began the occupation of Germany on December 1st.

The number of known dead has been placed at about 10 million, the wounded at about 20 million, distributed among the chief combatants as follows (round numbers):

	Dead	Wounded	Prisoners
Great Britain	947.000	2,122.000	192.000
France	1,385.000	2,370,448.000	446.000
Russia	1,700.000	4,950.000	2,500.000
Italy	460.000	947.000	530.000
United States	115.000	206.000	4.500
Germany	1,808.000	4,247.000	618.000
Austria-Hungary	1,200.000	3,620.000	2,200.000
Turkey	325.000	400.000	

The total direct cost of the war has been figured at 180,500,000,000 dollars and the indirect cost at 151,612,000,000 dollars.

Shortly before the German armistice, Bulgaria had collapsed, and signed an armistice at Saloniki on September 30th. Tsar Ferdinand of Bulgaria abdicated and was succeeded by his son Boris. Soon afterwards, Turkey had collapsed and concluded an armistice on October 30, 1918, after the Allies had entered ^{and} Rumania, that country now re-entered the war on the side of the Allies.

After the debacle on the Piave there was steady demoralization of the Austrian troops. On October 24th, the Italians attacked and advanced in Northern Italy, and the Austrians streamed back toward home. The Italians took Trieste and Fiume.

The end of the Habsburg Monarchy had started. On October 21st, the Tchechoslovaks declared their independence. On October 29th, the Yugoslav National Council at Agram proclaimed the independence of the Yugoslavs. Meanwhile, disorders in both Vienna and Budapest had resulted in revolutionary changes, the formation of a German National Council in Vienna for the German provinces, and establishment of an independent Hungarian government under Count Michael Karolyi. On November 3rd, as already mentioned, an armistice between the Allied Powers and Austria Hungary was concluded. On November 12th, emperor Charles I. abdicated. On November 13th, the Austrian Republic was proclaimed, and on November 16th followed the proclamation of the Hungarian Republic. On November 24th followed the proclamation of the United Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats,

and Slovenes at Zagreb. King Peter of Serbia became king, with Prince Alexander as regent. On December 1st, King Nikolaus of Montenegro, having opposed union, was declared deposed by the parliament, which then voted for the union with the new kingdom of Yugoslavia.

A national assembly of the Rumanians of Transylvania and the Banat at Alba-Julia voted on December 1st for union of these regions with Rumania.

The conference for the Peace Treaty of Versailles started on January 16th, 1919. President Wilson was received with wildest enthusiasm, when he arrived in Europe in mid-December. Lloyd George was the chief representative of Great-Britain and the empire. Clemenceau was the chief representative of France, and foreign minister Sonnino for Italy. Russia was not represented, though the Russian situation was of vital import. The wars of the counter-revolution were in full swing, and the fate of the new states on Russia's western frontiers depended on the outcome.

The conference unanimously adopted a resolution for the creation of a League of Nations. The drafting of the peace terms was marked by violent conflict by the members. Clemenceau insisted on the separation of the left bank of the Rhine from Germany. England and France demanded that Germany should be required to meet the costs of the war, a proposition to which Wilson objected. The treaty was finally signed on June 28th in the Hall of Mirrors in Versailles. The treaty provided for the League of Nations and for the following territorial cessions by Germany: Alsace-Lorraine to France, Eupen and Malmedy to Belgium. The Saar area to be under international administration

for 15 years, after which a plebiscite was to be held, France exploiting the coal mines in the meantime. In the East, Germany was to cede the larger part of Posen and West Prussia to Poland. Danzig was to be a free state within the Polish custom union. East-Prussia was to decide by plebiscites, whether it should go to Poland or remain with Germany. Memel was ceded to the Allies. The German colonies were also ceded to the Allies, to be organized as mandates under supervision of the League. Germany, in article 231, accepted sole responsibility for causing the war. The Allies were to occupy the Rhineland for 15 years, and longer, if necessary, and a belt, 30 miles wide on the right bank of the Rhine was to be demilitarized. The Germans were required to pay for all civilian damage caused during the war, the final bill to be presented by May 1st, 1921; in the interval, Germany was to pay 5 billion dollars, the rest to be paid in 30 years. Large quantities of coal were to be delivered to France, Belgium, and Italy for ten years. Germany was to hand over all merchant ships of more than 1600 tons and a quarter of her fishing fleet. She was henceforth to keep an army of not more than 100,000 men, was to have no large guns, no submarines or military aircraft.

On September 10th, 1919, Austria signed the treaty of Saint Germain. This treaty merely registered the break-up of the Habsburg Monarchy. Austria recognized the independence of Tchechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, Poland, and Hungary. Eastern Galicia, the Trentino, South Tyrol, Trieste were ceded by Austria. The army was limited to 30,000 men, and Austria, like Germany, was to pay reparations for 30 years. The union of Austria with Germany was forbidden, except with consent of the Council of the

League.

The Bulgarians signed on November 27th, 1919, the Treaty of Neuilly, which deprived them of the seaboard on the Aegean sea. Bulgaria recognized the independence of Yugoslavia. She signed to pay \$ 445.000 reparations. Her army was reduced to 20.000 men.

On March 22, 1919, the Hungarian government was overthrown by a Bolshevik coup, headed by Bela Kun. This government became involved in war with most of Hungary's neighbors. Ultimately, the Rumanians invaded Hungary, and took Budapest on August 4, just after the Bolsheviks had been overthrown on August 1st. The monarchists then regained control and appointed admiral Horthy as regent (Febr. 1920). The Rumanians were finally induced to withdraw (Dec. 10, 1919), under the pressure from the Allies, but only after they had carried away most of what was movable. On June 4th, 1920, the Hungarians signed the Treaty of Trianon, by which the old Hungary was shorn of almost $3/4$ of its territory, and $2/3$ of its inhabitants. Tchechoslovakia was given Slovakia, Austria received western Hungary, Yugoslavia took Croatia-Slavonia and part of the Banat of Temesvar, and Rumania received the rest of the Banat, Transylvania, and part of the Hungarian plain. Hungary agreed to ~~pay~~ reparations and to keep an army of only 35.000 men.

The settlement of the Turkish question was concluded by the signing of the Treaty of Sevres on August 20, 1919. The kingdom of Hijaz was recognized as independent. Syria became a mandate of France, and Mesopotamia as well as Palestine became British mandates. The Dodecanese and Rhodes Islands went to Italy, while Thrace and the remainder of the Turkish islands

1919

in the Aegean were assigned to Greece. Armenia was recognized as independent. Constantinople and the strip of territory to the Chatalja line remained Turkish, as did the remainder of Anatolia. The Treaty of Sévres was ultimately replaced by the Treaty of Lausanne.

These developments in the war and the peace agreements were given here in a description as short as possible, since they were necessary for the understanding of the situation during and after the greatest war in history, affecting the whole world. Many details were left out, like the war on the high seas and in the air, the use of poisonous gas on the western front, important battles on the Turkish front, and the war in Russia, which followed for a few more years, after the Bolsheviks had come to power, and were then attacked from all sides.

For those readers who are interested in some more details of that war, I am bringing here a very good description, which I have picked up recently with the help of a tape recorder from television. It starts with the participation of Italy in that war, in which I was a participant, and ends with the end of the war.

This description is marked with an asterisc in a red circle, like this  on page 135 in the beginning and at the end, and on page 151-G those readers who are not interested in this description can skip it, and go to the continuation of my biography on page 152.

CHAPTER 7

AFTER THE WAR, BACK IN CZERNOWITZ

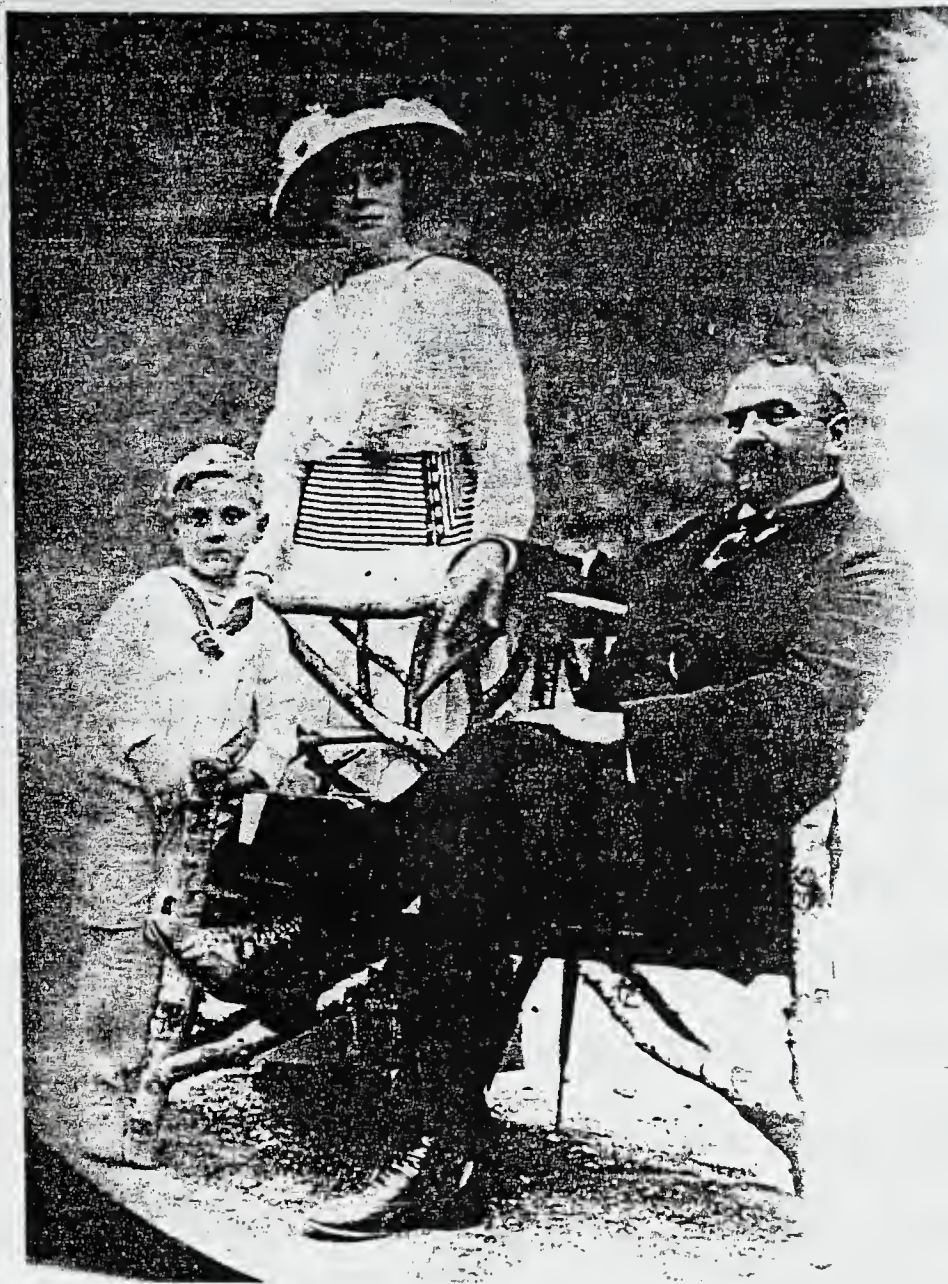
I return now to my own story, continuing where I had left off on page 128. As I had mentioned before, I arrived with Else in Czernowitz at the end of September 1918, and I registered immediately at the University. There was anarchy also in Czernowitz, as Ukrainian troops had taken over parts of the Bukowina, including Czernowitz. But soon afterwards Rumanian troops arrived, small contingents only, and succeeded in occupying the Bukowina, with very little shooting, and the Ukrainians retreated. These operations were in a kind of vacuum, and normal life returned soon to Czernowitz. The Rumanians went even much further, taking advantage of the upheaval and precarious situation, in which the Russian army was, and occupied all of Bessarabia, the province between the rivers Pruth and Dniester and the Black Sea, with the capital Kishinev.

The University functioned normally and so did other schools. My mother was happy, when we, Else and I, arrived. My stepfather had arrived a short time before us, and had resumed his business activities. Our house was undamaged and so was our apartment, although the Russian troops had lived there for over a year, and had destroyed many pieces of furniture, which they had used for heating. But they could be replaced by other more primitive tables, chairs and wardrobes, and we could live as

well as before. Else received frequently long letters from Franzl, in which he begged her to return to him to Vienna. Whether she answered him, I don't remember, but she refused to go back to him. That I know.

There was one thing that disturbed us very much and especially my mother. Alice and her husband Samuil were living in our apartment, and had converted our dining room into a bedroom for two. Our apartment was, after Else and I had arrived, really filled up to the brim. It should have been for them a short stay in our house, till they could find a suitable apartment. But they did not really look for one, and stayed for many months. When we had come to Vienna, 4 years back in 1914, we stayed also in their apartment, but only for 2 or 3 days, and only I was especially invited by aunt Rosa to stay with them for a longer time. But this was now a different situation, as we were terribly crowded there. My mother was especially annoyed, since they had a room occupied, through which everybody had to pass, especially when going to sleep and after getting up in the morning. Alice had the habit of walking around in her night gown, which did not cover very well her breasts, and did not put on a robe. Since my stepfather had to pass that room, my mother was very annoyed and really jealous. This came to an end after a few months, when they moved out, and the relation between my mother and Alice remained cool for a very long time afterwards.

We were now all at home, with the exception of Carl, who had gotten an engagement with the theatre in Krems from November 1st, 1918 till September 30th, 1919. We had to tell each other stories about our experiences during the war, and were



Heinrich Brunwasser, our mother, and little Walter



Walter. from a painting made by Elise

sitting together every night, without end. Uncle Isidor, aunt Gusta, Isa, and Egon were back in Storoznetz, but their oldest son, Marzell, was wounded in the war and as a prisoner in Russia. Some time later, he came back, bringing with him a Russian wife.

Among many others, my old love, Mitzi Klein, and her family were also back in Czernowitz. I visited her quite often. But a change had taken place: My feelings for her had cooled off, and I had to tell her one day that I did not love her anymore. We had a serious long discussion about it, but it did not help and she cried bitterly. It so happened that some time before I had met one of her friends, Sidy Berler, also a very pretty girl, in her house, and I had fallen in love with her. I went to her house and spent many pleasant evenings with her. Later on, she spoke about marriage and was willing ^{to wait} 4 or 5 years till I would have finished my medical studies. But I was soon disillusioned, especially when I met her parents, who were very primitive people, and my love cooled off soon. Anyway, I was about to leave for Vienna soon. I had introduced her to my mother, who did not discourage me, since she seemed to like her. But I had serious doubts finally that this was the right girl for me to marry.

When the collapse of the monarchy came, I had, of course, to take off my uniform and put on civilian cloths. To get these was not easy, since there was great shortage in everything, and the stores, which had opened, had little to offer and of poor quality. But that was not tragic, and I could go out into the street without having to be ashamed, since everybody was in the same situation. Anyway, I was all day long at the University.

My eagerness to study was great. I was hungry to learn.

I was a different man now, when I came back from the war. I was not a broken-down man, just the opposite, I was full of ambition and a desire to start a new life. I got up early every morning, since the classes started at 8 o'clock, and I came home late in the evening. I had registered for every subject that was taught, did not leave out anything. Many professors had returned to the University and were teaching again. Here is a list of the subjects for which I had registered, with the names of the teachers if I remember them: Chemistry (Prof. Pomeranz), Physics, Botany, Zoology (Prof. Zelinka), Zoologic microscopy (Prof. Zelinka), Embryology, Bacteriology (Prof. Raubitschek), Geology (Prof. Pennecke), Mineralogy (Dr. Reinhold), Crystallographic practicum (Dr. Reinhold).

I was always very interested in Natural History, in many of its branches. I had started with collecting butterflies and other insects, and that remained my main hobby for most of my life, with some longer interruptions, re-awakened by Francis' interest in it. But it was Zoology in general that was one of my main interests, my strength, as we say in German, my interest in all animals that crawl, fly, or swim. And mineralogy, crystallography, geology, and, to a minor extent also astronomy. I had a collection of minerals, many of them ordered and sent from Switzerland, from Disentis in Graubuenden. I ^{had} at different periods of my life an aquarium. All that, combined, was partially the reason that I later decided to study medicine. It may have helped me to become what is generally called a "good doctor". Perhaps I was one.

The official language in the Bukowina was now Rumanian, but it took a long time, till people learned to speak it. Names of streets were changed, and antisemitism could be noticed everywhere. Corruption was rampant, and one could not accomplish anything in the official offices without paying under the table. All that had to be accepted, and life in general was not unpleasant. It was, of course, difficult for the pupils in the schools to learn the new language, and the Rumanians were very strict about it. But they allowed the opening of the new theatre season with a German ensemble, as I had already mentioned before, and we had an excellent theatre season like in olden days, with excellent actors and singers.

My interest in theatre playing woke up again, since there was our club of amateurs, which became very active again. We started soon with rehearsals, and came out already on March 15, 1919, with the performance of Max Halbe's drama "Jugend" (Youth). I have a collection of almost all the original theatre bills and of newspaper clippings, containing critiques. One theatre bill I don't have. We had played a drama by Hermann Sudermann, "Heimat" (Homeland). It was a fine performance, in which my sister Else had a part too. I had only a minor part in that play. At that time, the regular theatre ensemble was still using the theatre building. We had, therefore, to play in another location, the "Deutsches Haus". For the stage management we engaged one of the best actors of the theatre ensemble, a Mr. Hartberg, and for the most important female part a young actress, Miss Ewald. In the play "Jugend" I played an important role, the role of a pastor. On April 9th, we played the

F l o n d e r e n i - Deutsches Haus .

Mittwoch, den 9. April 1919.

P R O G R A M M

" J u g e n d "

Liebesdrama in 3 Akten von M a x H a l b e .

Regie: Viktor HARTBERG, Oberreg. des Czernowitzer
Stadttheater.

P e r s o n e n :

Harrer Hoppe..... Adolf Mechner

Annchen, seine Wichte..... Minni K w a l d
v. Czern. Stadttheater.

Amandus, ihr jüngerer Stiefbruder.. Heinrich Beron

Kaplan Gregor v. Schigorski..... Max T a u n e r
v. Czern. Stadttheater.

Hans Hartwig, ein junger Student... Sigmund Fulmann.

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

Die Handlung spielt im polnischen Westpreussen.

Nach Schluss der Vorstellung wird Oberregisseur

Viktor HARTBERG einige Rezitationen zum Vortrag
bringen.

Preis 1 Krone.

STADT-THEATER



IN CZERNOWITZ.

Samstag, den 19. Juli 1919

zu Gunsten des Ferienheimfondes der Versicherungsangestellten

„DER STROM“

Drama in 3 Akten von Max Halbe.

In Szene gesetzt von Herrn Direktor Ludwig Sillée.

Personen:

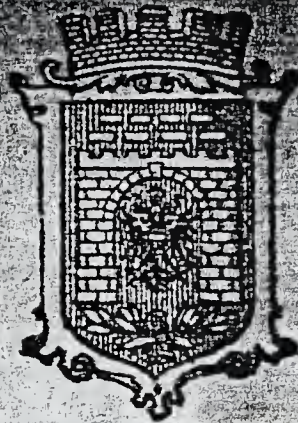
Philippine Doorn	Else Maylor
Peter Doorn, Deichhauptmann	Stephan Rubasch
Heinrich Doorn, Strombaumeister	Sigmund Pulmann
Jakob Doorn	Heinrich Beron
Renate, Peters Frau	Mannert-Brodowska
Reinhold Ulrichs	Adolf Mechner
Hanne, Dienstmädchen	Thea Runes

Ort der Handlung: Mündungsgebiet der Weichsel.

Anfang 8 Uhr abends.

Kartenvorverkauf aus Gefälligkeit in der Buchhandlung GUTHERZ, Ringplatz.

STADT-THEATER



IN CZERNOWITZ.

Donnerstag, den 31. Juli 1919:

Die

Haubenlerche

Schauspiel in 4 Akten von E. von Wildenbruch.

Personen:

August Langenthal	Brunno Roll
Hermann, dessen Halbbruder	Karl Gross
Julianne, beider Cousine	Mannert-Brodowska
Frau Schmalenbach, Fabriksbesitzerswitwe	Ely Maylor
Lene, ihre Tochter	Siddy Blaukopf
Ale Schmalenbach, Schwager der Frau Schmalenbach,	
Lumpenfaktor in der Fabrik	Adolf Mechner
Paul Ilefeld, erster Buttgeselle in der Fabrik	Heinrich Beron

Anfang 8 Uhr abends.

**Kartenvorverkauf im Theaterkartenbüro Herrengasse u. am Tage der Vorstellung
ab 7 Uhr an der Abendkassa.**

Wohltätigkeits-Vorstellung

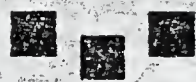
IM STADTTHEATER.

Aktion: Minna Feller für notleidende Kinder.

Freitag, den 16. Mai 1919 und
Samstag nachm., den 17. Mai:

„Aschenbrödel“

Komödie in 6 Bildern von A. Görner.
Inszeniert von Minna Feller.



PERSONEN:

König Kakadu	H. Mechner.
Prinz Wunderhold	H. Pulmann
Minister Puterhahn	H. Gaster
Hofmarschall Grasemück	H. Guttman
Stallmeister Wiedehopf	H. Gold
Baron von Montekontekukulorum	H. Münzer
Sybilla, seine zweite Gemahlin verwitw. Gräfin v. Knitterknatterschnatterhausen	Frl. Weich.
Kunigunde } ihre Töchter erster Ehe	Frl. Ausländer
Serafine	Frl. Brodowska
Rosa, genannt Aschenbrödel, des Barons Tochter erster Ehe	Frl. Feller
Fee Walpurgis	Frl. Dubovy
Sylax, ihr Diener (Bettler)	H. Fokschaner
Ilse, eine Magd	Frl. Gutmann
Ein Portier	kl. Silberbusch

Hofdamen und -Herren, junge Damen und Herren der Gesellschaft.

Feenbalett (ausgeführt von jungen Damen der Gesellschaft) und
Heinzelmännchenbalett (ausgeführt von Kindern), arrangiert
von Frl. Werner.

Solotänze : Frl. Markus und Frl. Klüger.

BEGINN: Freitag 7^h abends, Samstag 3^h nachm.
Karten in der Buchhandlung Gutherz.

Stadttheater in Czernowitz.

Samstag, den 5. Juli 1919

— zu Gunsten der notleidenden Witznitzer Bevölkerung —

„Hinter Mauern“

Schauspiel aus dem jüdischen Familien-
leben in 4 Akten von H. NATHANSEN.

In Szene gesetzt von Herrn Stefan Rubasch.

Personen:

Adolf Levin, Bankier	Bruno Goth. —
Sara Levin, dessen Frau	Else Maylor. —
Esther, } deren Kinder	Lotty Blaukopf. —
Hugo, }	Adolf Mechner. —
Jakob, }	Heinrich Beron. —
Dina, Jakobs Frau	Ella Münzer. —
Sara, deren Töchterchen	kl. Guthertz. —
Meyer, Prokurist	Fritz Münzer. —
Etatsrat Herming	Bruno Roll. —
Etatsrätin Herming	Emilie Weber. —
Dr. Herming	Sigmund Pulmann. —
Dienstmädchen	Rosl Groß. —
Diener bei Herming	Adolf Guttman. —

Anfang 8 Uhr abends.

o o o o o Kartenvorverkauf bei GUTHERZ, Ringplatz. o o o o o

100
100
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800

Theater und Kunst.

Sinter Mauern. Eine äußerst interessante Theatervorstellung fand am Samstag, den 5. d. M. bei vollständig ausverkauftem Hause in unserem Stadttheater statt. Unsere besten Dilettanten, oder besser gesagt, jungen Künstler haben das bekannte Schauspiel aus dem jüdischen Leben „Sinter Mauern“ von S. Nathansen Aufführung gebracht. Wenn auch die Namen Goltz, Blaukopf, Jener und Beron von vornherein das Beste erwarten ließen, so war doch die Aufführung überrascht. Schon die Ausstattung und die Regieführung waren so glänzend, daß sie keinen Augenblick vermuten ließen, daß es sich um eine Dilettantenvorstellung handelte. Und darum müssen wir zunächst Herrn Stefan Rubasch, der die Inszenierung besorgte und die Regie führte, alles Lob zollen. Herr Goltz, der den alten Bankier Lewin darstellte, war in Maske und Spiel gleich vorzüglich. Er führte seine Rolle gleichmäßig und temperamentvoll von Beginn bis zum Schluß durch. Herr Pullmann spielte die sehr dankbare Rolle des Dr. Herming und wirkte namentlich im 3. Akte, in der Auseinandersetzung mit seinem Vater ganz ausgezeichnet. Sein Ausruf „Unsere Kinder sollen nicht Juden, nicht Christen, sondern Menschen sollen sie sein!“ rief einen Beifallsturm hervor. Frä. Blaukopf, die schon durch ihre äußere Erscheinung außerordentlich sympathisch wirkt, hat die Rolle der Esther sehr gut bewältigt. Es ist ihr gelungen, den Zwiepsalt in ihrer Seele, hervorgerufen durch die Liebe und Anhänglichkeit zu den jüdischen Eltern und ihrer Herzensliebe zu dem jungen christlichen Dr. Herming sehr gefühlvoll zum Ausdruck zu bringen. Gute Leistungen boten noch: Herr Adolf Mechner als akademisch gebildeter Jude (Hugo, Sohn des alten Lewin), Herr Heinrich Beron als Jakob, Herr Fritz Münzler als Prokurist Meyer. Wiederum aufgefallen ist Herr Josef Roll als Staatsrat Herming, der schon in der vor einiger Zeit stattgefundenen Dilettantenvorstellung „Staatsanwalt Alexander“ ein überraschendes schauspielerisches Talent bekundete. Herr Roll hat die sehr undankbare und schwierige Rolle des Staatsrates Herming geradezu meisterhaft durchgeführt. Die Auseinandersetzung mit dem alten Lewin, später mit Esther und zum Schluß mit dem eigenen Sohne zeigte von solch gründlicher Auffassung der Rolle und von einem solchen schauspielerischen Talente, daß man absolut nicht den Eindruck hatte, einen jungen 17-jährigen Studenten vor sich zu haben, sondern man glaubte eher, einen routinierten Schauspieler zu hören. Ganz besonders entzückte sein ungemein weiches, gluckenhell klingendes Organ und seine besonders reine und deutliche Aussprache. Sehr gut gefallen haben noch: Frä. Mecher als Staatsrätin Herming und Frä. Elka Münzler als Jakobs Frau. Daß Frau Manlor ganz ausgezeichnet war, ist wohl nicht nötig hervorzuheben. Schließlich sei noch die kleine Gultchert erwähnt, die sehr lieb und herzlich spielte. E. G.

Glondorei. (Storoznyeh.) Am 9. d. M. fand im Deutschen Hause in Glondorei eine Wohltätigkeitsveranstaltung statt, die den Besuchern noch lange in angenehmer Erinnerung bleiben wird. Czernowitzer Dilettanten gelang es unter Mitwirkung tüchtiger Berufsschauspieler, Max Halbes „Jugend“ zu einer Aufführung zu bringen, durch die das zahlreich versammelte, kunstsinige Publikum in wahres Staunen versetzt wurde. Das verständnisvolle Spiel der Einzelnen ergab eine bis in die kleinsten Feinheiten ausgeprägte Gesamtleistung. Vor allem Frä. Wimin Ewald (Annen), die durch ihr vollendetes Spiel die Herzen der Zuschauer im Sturm eroberte. In Herrn Pullmann (Hans) fand sie einen flotten Partner, der seiner schwierigen Rolle ganz gewachsen war. Herr Mechner gab den Pfarrer Hoppe mit großer Natürlichkeit. Spiel und Haltung verraten ein starkes Schauspieler-talent. Eine Glanzleistung bot Herr Baron als Amanus, der in den Szenen seiner Wutausbrüche geradezu erschütternd wirkte. Herr Länger (Kaplan Schlgotski) zeigte sich als guter Sprecher und wurde seiner Aufgabe voll und ganz gerecht. Das Hauptverdienst aber kommt dem Spielleiter, Herrn Hartberg, zu, der es verstand, dieses schwierige Drama mit durchwegs jungen Leuten zu einer selten guten Aufführung zu bringen. Nicht anders waltete der Applaus, als er zum Schluß einige Gedichte zum Vortrage brachte. Es war ein überaus schöner Abend, der durch ein langanhaltendes feines Wohlgeschmack land. Das Arrangement lag in den Händen der Damen. Frau Dr. Drang, Frau Dr. David, und Frau Dr. Borch, die sich um das gute Gelingen der Veranstaltung bemühten.

Theater und Kunst.

Der Strom.

Drama in drei Akten von Max Halbe.

(Dilettantenvorstellung im Stadttheater.)

Fast in allen Dramen Halbes wird man ein gemeinsames Motiv, nämlich die tiefe Liebe zur All-Natur und die geheimnisvollen Beziehungen zwischen den Menschenjochsamen und den dämonischen Naturkräften behandelt finden. Der Inhalt dieses Stückes ist, kurz, folgender: Von drei Brüdern hat der älteste, Peter, der Weichhauptmann eines vorgeführten „verlorenen Postens“ am Mündungsgebiete der Weichsel ist, das Testament des Vaters zu Ungunsten der anderen Jakob und Heinrich, unterschlagen und sich durch diese verbrecherische Handlung zum Herrn und Gebieter des ganzen Stromes gemacht. Sein mittlerer Bruder, Heinrich, hat rechtzeitig die Heimat verlassen und durch akademische Studien einen angesehenen Posten als Vermessungsingenieur erlangt. Auf Grund eines behördlichen Auftrages wird er mit der Regulierung des wilden Stromes, der den Seinigen durch öftere Dammbrüche großen Schaden zugefügt und beinahe das Leben gekostet hatte, beauftragt und kehrt in dieser neuen Eigenschaft in die Heimat zurück. Sein jüngster Bruder Jakob hat es durch die Schuld seines ältesten Bruders nur bis zum Absolvieren einer Vorstudie gebracht und leistete im Hofe demselben nur mit größtem Widerwillen und Trost Frohndienste. Die Frau des Weichhauptmannes Renate verrät, unterstützt von Dr. Ulrich, auf das Drängen Heinrichs und Jakobs hin das sie alle in gedrückte Stimmung versetzende Geheimnis. Es kommt zu einer sehr bewegten Aussprache zwischen den Brüdern. Keiner von den beiden Parteien will nachgeben, ja der Älteste jagt, seiner Sinne bar, seine beiden Jüngeren zum Hause hinaus. Jakob eilt mutentbrannt zum Damm, durchsticht ihn und die gewaltigen Wassermassen des hochgeschwollenen Stromes ergießen sich gegen das Haus. Peter stürzt hinaus und erblickt seinen Bruder. Es kommt zu einem erbitterten Kampfe auf Leben und Tod zwischen Jakob und Peter am Rande des Damms, keiner vermag den anderen zu überwäligen und beide stürzen in die reißenden Fluten. Diese Handlung wird mit meisterhafter Bühnentechnik auf drei Akte verteilt. Alle Darsteller bemühten sich redlich um den Erfolg. Herr Rubasch (Peter), der in Maske und Spiel gleich vorzüglich war, stellte einen kraftvollen, markigen Herrenmenschen dar, der sich weit über alle menschlichen Gebote hinwegsetzt und auch nicht davon zurückscheut, über Leichen zu gehen. Sogar bis zuletzt will er seine große Schuld nicht eingestehen. Frau Mannert-Brodowska (Renate), fand in den tragischen Momenten tief zu Herzen gehende Töne. Eine vollendete Leistung bot Frau Manlor (Philippine.) Herr Beron fand den richtigen Ton für die Darstellung des trübsamen Jakobs. Die Rolle des „gebildeten Bruders“ lag Herrn Pullmann sehr gut. Eine drollige Figur stellte Herr Mechner auf die Bühne. Er fand viel Beifall. Lobende Erwähnung verdient schließlich auch Frä. Kares (Dienstmädchen.) Der Regie des Herrn Sillee gebührt uneingeschränkte Anerkennung. E. M.

Donnerstag, am 31. Juli, bekamen wir auf unserer heimischen Bühne das Wildenbruchsche Schauspiel „Die Haubentlerche“ zu sehen, eine neuzeitliche Schöpfung, wo raffinierter Aristokratismus und naives Biedermannsthum des Volkes sich gegenüberstehen. Für die Regie stand Herr Maximilian Berndt ein, der sein angelegte Stimmungen hervorzujubern wußte. In der Titelrolle der „Haubentlerche“ entzückte Frä. Eddys Blaukopf und zeigte neue Seiten ihres Bühnentalentes, die bisher verborgen geblieben waren: Temperament und Leidenschaft. Abhängig davon war sie im letzten Akte. Ihr Partner, Herr Karl Goltz, benahm sich würdig und tat sein Bestes. Unerkennbar war Herr Mechner als Lampenonkel mit seinen überhöhen, alkigen Lebensansichten. Die Damen Brodowska und Manlor und die Herrn Rau und Beron ergänzten wirkungsvoll das Ganze — Summa Summarum: Ein gelungener Abend, dessen Besuch trotz der gutbrütenden Hundstage nicht reute.

same play in Storozynetz with the same ensemble. Shortly afterwards, on May 16th, and again the next day in the afternoon we played "Aschenbroedel", in English "Cinderella" in the Stadt-theater in Czernowitz. It was a great social event. How it was arranged that the regular theatre ensemble surrendered the theatre for one evening and the afternoon on the next day to our club for the performance of Cinderella, I don't know anymore. A lady, Mrs. Minna Feller, had connections to and great influence in the City Hall, and was instrumental in freeing the theatre for these two performances. Her young daughter played the part of Cinderella. There were two ballets, a ballet of fairies and a ballet of goblins. The whole affair was an enormous success, really gorgeous and refreshing.

Then came on July 5th, 1919 the play "Hinter Mauern" (Behind Walls) by Henry Nathanson, a Danish author, which we had played already once before in the year 1913. This time, I did not play two parts and there was no complication anymore with the loss of the moustache. The success was so great that we repeated the performance 10 days later. Then came, on July 19th, 1919, the drama "Der Strom" (The stream), by Max Halbe. It was again a great success. The last play was "Die Haubenlerche" (The crested lark), by Ernst von Wildenbruch, performed on July 31, 1919. This was the end of my theatrical carrier. Acting on the stage brought me much inspiration and satisfaction, and was very conducive to my successes later in my profession and life in general. I should also mention here that during that first year after returning from the war, I was taking lessons in acting, reciting, and clear speaking with one of the best professional actors of the theatre in Czernowitz, Victor Hartberg. I studied with him

many parts in classical plays like Schiller's "Kabale und Liebe" "Cabal and Love", Gutzkow's "Uriel Acosta", and modern plays like Gerhart Hauptmann's "Die versunkene Glocke" (The sunken bell). I also learned with him reciting of famous classical poems, among them poems by Anton Wildgans.

My studies at the University gave me much satisfaction. But there came now a time to make serious decisions. I had to think of my future. The decision to study medicine came suddenly. I never had thought of it before. All that what I had learned during this last year appeared to be an excellent preparation for the study of medicine. And an excellent opportunity to go to Vienna came up. After the war, many people were stranded in different parts of the former Austrian monarchy. The railroads did not function for a long time, and people had to stay where they were, when the monarchy collapsed.

1919

CHAPTER 8
START WITH MEDICINE

One day, a so-called Heimkehrer Transport, in English home-comers transport, was organized for Austrians. Many people went to register and I went too. They were not too strict and did not ask for proof that one was really an Austrian citizen, since many people had lost their papers. So, I was accepted and put on the list. I had to say again "good bye" to all my loved ones, and also to my girl friend, Sidy Berler and her family.

And so I went with the Austrian home-comers to Vienna. Many old friends and some of the professors from the University were also on the train. It was a long ride, taking two or three days. To my astonishment, my stepfather had given me an amount of money for the trip, which should cover my expenses for the whole year. And it was really enough. I found very soon a furnished room, which I shared with a friend. It was in Ser-

vitengasse 13 in the 9th district. I registered immediately in the medical school and was accepted. Students did not have to pay any tuition fees in those days. I also filled out a document, in which I declared my option for the Republic of Austria as my home-land. This was only a declaration from my side and did not make me a citizen. It took about 5 years, until I was finally accepted as a citizen and I received an Austrian Heimatschein, the document attesting to it.

I started seriously with my studies of medicine and went to all lectures regularly. The subjects were biology, physics, chemistry, anatomy, histology, and physiology. Final examinations in these subjects could only be taken after $2\frac{1}{2}$ years. I was all day from morning till late in the afternoon busy, and we had to run from one institute to another one, which were quite far apart. Most time we spent in the anatomical institute, which was headed by the famous professor Tandler, who had many assistants and instructors. We first got human bones, which we had to study on hand of books, which described every detail of them. Most complicated were the bones of the skull and face. Next came dissections of cadavers. We learned soon to overcome the distaste of dissecting cadavers. It often happened that I found myself alone in a room, where there were 6 to 8 cadavers lying on tables. Our work was always supervised by the instructors, who marked our progress in their books.

The lecture hall of professor Tandler was always filled to capacity, since he was an excellent and famous teacher. Chemical experiments in the chemical institute played also an important part of our work, and we had to study in the evenings and on weekends at home to prepare ourselves for the next day. At

the end of each semester we had to take examinations, which were called colloquia, usually held by the assistants of the various professors. In general, it was a strict program, and we were kept busy all the time.

The study plan consisted of three parts, called *rigorosa*. After passing the examinations of the first six subjects, one received a certificate of the first *rigorosum*. For the next 12 subjects, one had to study another $2\frac{1}{2}$ years, before one was allowed to take the examinations. The second *rigorosum* consisted of the following 6 subjects: Pathologic anatomy, experimental pathology, pharmacology, internal medicine, pediatrics, psychiatry, and for the third *rigorosum* the subjects were: Surgery, hygiene, legal medicine, gynecology and obstetrics, dermatology, and ophthalmology.

Attending lectures in all these subjects was obligatory, although it seldom happened that a professor read a list of students to check whether they were present or not. In general the students had so-called academic freedom, the choice to go to different lectures about the same subjects, for instance, if one wanted he could go to the lecture about surgery either to the lecture of professor Eiselsberg or professor Hochenegg, which were held at the same time between 10 and 12 o'clock. Students could also register for courses, which were not obligatory, like embryology, hematology, orthopedic surgery, tuberculosis, etc. and that is what I did. To some I went even together with my father-in-law.

After passing all examinations, one graduated in a ceremonial graduation and received a diploma, which entitled one to open right away an office and treat patients. Some

people did that, but most graduates preferred to register in a hospital to get acquainted with the treatment of patients in hospitals. I myself did that for 5 years, practicing in different clinics, at the same time working in an institute for pathology under professor Carl Sternberg, observing autopsies of patients, who had died in the hospital, examining parts of the organs under the microscope, performing autopsies myself, doing work in bacteriology etc.

I graduated on March 13th, 1925. I had postponed the last examination for half a year, because I had not yet received my citizenship paper. It was quite difficult to get it, and it required the intervention of many prominent people, till I got it. Had I not postponed my last examination, I would have had to graduate as a foreign student and would have had to return to Rumania and practice medicine there.

I am leaving here the description of my activities as a medical student, to describe also my social life, the other side of the coin. There was enough time for enjoyment, for recreation, for theatres, concerts, movies, excursions, etc. And there was also dancing. There was a girl, Fritzi Feller, whom I knew for years from Czernowitz, who lived with her family during the entire war in Vienna. Her brother, Branco Feller, was a colleague of mine in the gymnasium. I was seeing her from time to time, usually on weekends, and visited her also in her home. She played nicely the piano, was taking lessons, and I remember especially that she played the Wanderer Phantasy by Schubert quite well. I went often dancing with her and I enjoyed it. I never was in love with her. She was not especially pretty and was very nearsighted. It

was a simple, minor affair, but not more. We sometimes also went to balls, always with her mother as a chaperon. That was the rule in those days. Through her I became acquainted with other young girls and, among others, with a girl whose name was Anny Pariser. She was an especially good dancer and was a friend of Fritzi Feller. Occasionally we visited Anny Pariser in her home.



Hedy c.1920



Hedy c.1924

1919

CHAPTER 9
MEETING HEDY

She was a cousin of Hedy, whom she introduced once to me. She was beautiful and made a great impression on me. I told Anny that I would like to meet her again, and she came with her to one of the next balls in the Sophiensaal, a very big dance hall. There I had an opportunity to take a better look at her, and I fell in love with her. From then on it was only Hedy and no other girl anymore. At night, I was dreaming about her. I felt about her as never before in my life. To me she looked like a madonna, behaved nicely, and had a fine smile. I met also her mother, since she was her chaperon at the ball. She also made a great impression on me, and I loved her also right away.

Hedy had just finished 5 years as a student of the Beamten-tochter-Lyceum, and had started as a student of chemistry at the University. I then met Hedy more often. I often picked her up in the afternoon at the chemical institute, and accompanied her home. Soon I was invited to visit her at her home and met her father, Dr. Ziegler, her sister Lisa, who was about 15 years old and very pretty, and her brother Erich, who was about 10 years old, and a lovely boy. They all were very nice to me, and I, in return liked them very much.

Picking Hedy up from the chemical institute and accompa-

nying her home became soon routine, although I did not go upstairs with her each time. But I was often invited for meals, and it did not take long that I became an almost daily guest for dinner. On weekends, we often went iceskating, later in spring on excursions in the Wienerwald, often together with Lisa and Erich. Hedy took at that time English lessons with a miss Butterworth, a lovely English lady, and soon I became her pupil also. I loved Hedy's mother very much, also liked her father very much, who was extremely friendly towards me and introduced me to others, doctors and patients, as "docto-randus", which meant future doctor (in Latin).

I should mention here that Sidy Berler, my former girlfriend from Czernowitz, was quite upset that I had never written to her, since I had left Czernowitz. She had visited my mother a few times, but she was unable to explain to her, what had happened. She must have made inquiries about me and must have found out that I often went in the late afternoon to the Cafe Siller, a big coffee house on the Franz Josef's Kai. One day, she was standing there, looking at me. I got up and showed surprise that she had made the trip to Vienna, asked her how she liked Vienna, and how her parents were. It was a short conversation, and I went back to my table, where my friends were. She had made that trip just to see me, perhaps had expected to hear more from me. But I had to play it this way and she must have been very disappointed. I could not help her. She wanted to get married, and the moment she spoke about it, it was the end of our relationship, because I was far from ready for it, very far. Anyway, it was not a catastrophe for her, because I had heard soon afterwards that she had married another boy, a

former classmate of mine.

Now back to more important things, my studies. I took them seriously and spent many evenings and nights over my books. My first examination of biology I took on March 16th, 1920, and passed it with the Mark "genuegend", which means satisfactory. On the same day I took the examination of physics and passed it with the mark "ausgezeichnet", which means excellent. I was glad that these two examinations were over. Now I had to start to study for my examination of chemistry, which I intended to take in December.

I had now more time for other more pleasant things. I met Hedy now daily at the chemical institute and accompanied her home. We went quite often to shows and also to operas and became great opera enthusiasts, always sitting high up in the gallery in the last row, or on the stairs behind the gallery, with the libretto in our hands, without seeing the stage. I especially was at that time a great Wagner enthusiast. We also went often to concerts. On weekends, we often went on excursions, usually for one day, into the beautiful Wienerwald (woods of Vienna), easily accessible by streetcar, walking long distances through the woods, and returning home again by streetcar. Often the Kahlenberg and the adjacent Leopoldsberg were the objects of our trip, sometimes the Alte Donau or the Lobau, where we rented a boat and rowed all day long.

Once Hedy and her English teacher, Miss Butterworth, had planned a bigger excursion to Langenwang in Styria for about 3 days. This was the area, where the famous Austrian poet Peter Rosegger once lived. Hedy's mother proposed that I should join them, and I gladly accepted. I was perhaps an intruder,

and they may have liked it better to go without me. But anyway, it was a nice trip.

I should also mention that this was the time, when the tone movies started. Till then, there were only silent movies. I remember that we once went to the Urania, our observatory in Vienna, where they showed a movie of a farm house and we could see and hear dogs barking, ducks gackle, roosters crow, etc. We were quite astonished. Hedy had to prepare herself for an examination, and once she asked me to give her questions to answer out of a very heavy book of anorganic chemistry by Treadwell. I asked her great amny questions at random, and she answered all of them correctly. She was quite a good student.

Now the summer started and I went for a 2-months vacation to Czernowitz. I took a book of organic chemistry (by Vannino) along, and studied every day for a few hours. It was nice to be at home again. I often went with my mother and little Walter, who was by now 10 years old, to the river Pruth, where there was a nice sand beach. We usually met there friends of my mother. I was not a good swimmer, since I did not learn it when I was young, and once almost drowned.

My stepfather had enlarged his mineral water business very much, and was doing quite well. I spent two very pleasant months there, and when the time to leave came, my stepfather gave me again the money for the whole year.

In Vienna I found a nice furnished room in the Florianigasse in the 8th district, quite near the medical institutes. I had to study hard, since my next examination of chemistry was a very difficult subject. I signed up for December 13th,



Benjamin and Gina Ziegler in 1901



Gina 1908



Gina 1921

This is a caricature of miss Fanny Brueckl which I had made of her many years back and found now among my papers.

1920, and passed the examination with the mark excellent. Life in general was as before, attending lectures at the University, now mostly in the 3 last subjects of the first rigorosum, anatomy, histology, and physiology, which meant also attending special courses of sections of cadavers, also in histology preparation of parts of organs for microscopic examination, also special courses in physiology.

But there were many evenings for more pleasant things, visiting Hedy almost daily and staying there till late at night. There were shows, operas, concerts, and, when spring came, excursions. But in the meantime, I had to study hard, and I took the examination of anatomy on July 12th, 1921, and passed it with the mark satisfactory. The examiner was the famous professor Tandler. Then I left again for my vacation in Czernowitz for 2 or 3 months. It was always very pleasant.

When I returned to Vienna, I rented a furnished room in Belvederegasse No. 36, in the 4th district. I stayed from then on for 7 years there. The landlady, Mrs. Wagner, was very nice and next to her apartment lived her sister, about 75 years old, whom we called aunt Fanny. She was quite lively for her age, and she liked me very much. When I came home late at night, and saw that there was light in her room, I knocked and entered and sat then with her and she made coffee for me.

I had to prepare myself for the next examination of histology, which I took on December 13th, 1921, and passed it with the mark satisfactory. I should mention that the examiner, professor Schaffer, was known as an antisemite, like many others of the medical faculty. I really deserved the mark excellent, but that mark only people got, who had a certain button





1907



1911



Hedy

1928



Adolph

1921



L.to r.: Erich, Hedy, Adolph,
Lisa and Mr. Fischel

in their lapel. Great many professors of the Vienna University were antisemites and that was known all over the world. Not only students were the victims, but also people of the teaching staff, who, if they were Jewish, had to do really outstanding work to get the title "Privatdozent". Great many of them got stuck there forever, others had to wait very long, among them the famous Siegmund Freud, till they advanced to get the title professor. It did not bother me that I got the mark "satisfactory" in histology, as a matter of fact, I did not expect a better mark from ~~from~~ that professor Schaffer. But histology was one of my favoured subjects, I was very well prepared for the examination, and I answered all of the many, many questions correctly. The main thing was that I passed the examination.

Life in general was pleasant and it became routine that I spent every evening with Hedy at her home till late at night. I am trying to remember specific experiences, but after more than 50 years this becomes difficult. I have 7 albums with pictures, most of which I had taken myself, the majority of which are portraits of Hedy or the members of her family. We made often excursions on weekends, sometimes for two or three days, mostly into the Alps south of Vienna. I have one picture of an excursion to the Hohe Wand (high wall), which required much walking on steep pathways, and it shows 5 people sitting around a table ^{in a tourist house,} my father-in-law, Hedy, myself, Lisa, and a young man, whose name I don't know anymore. My father-in-law was 60 years old at that time, but he liked to come along on our tours.

Lisa was 18 years old at that time and there were quite

Adolph, Maryla Frisch, Miriam
Feniger, Hedy.



A friend, Lisa, Dr. Ziegler
Hedy, Adolph.



Maryla Frisch, Miriam Feniger
Hedy, Adolph.





Adolph and Hedy

1928



Hedy

1922



Lisa

1922



Mausi, 8 months old



Carl and Mausi



Adolph, 1914



Ludwig Ohrlaender, Adolph, Lotte and Bertha
1923



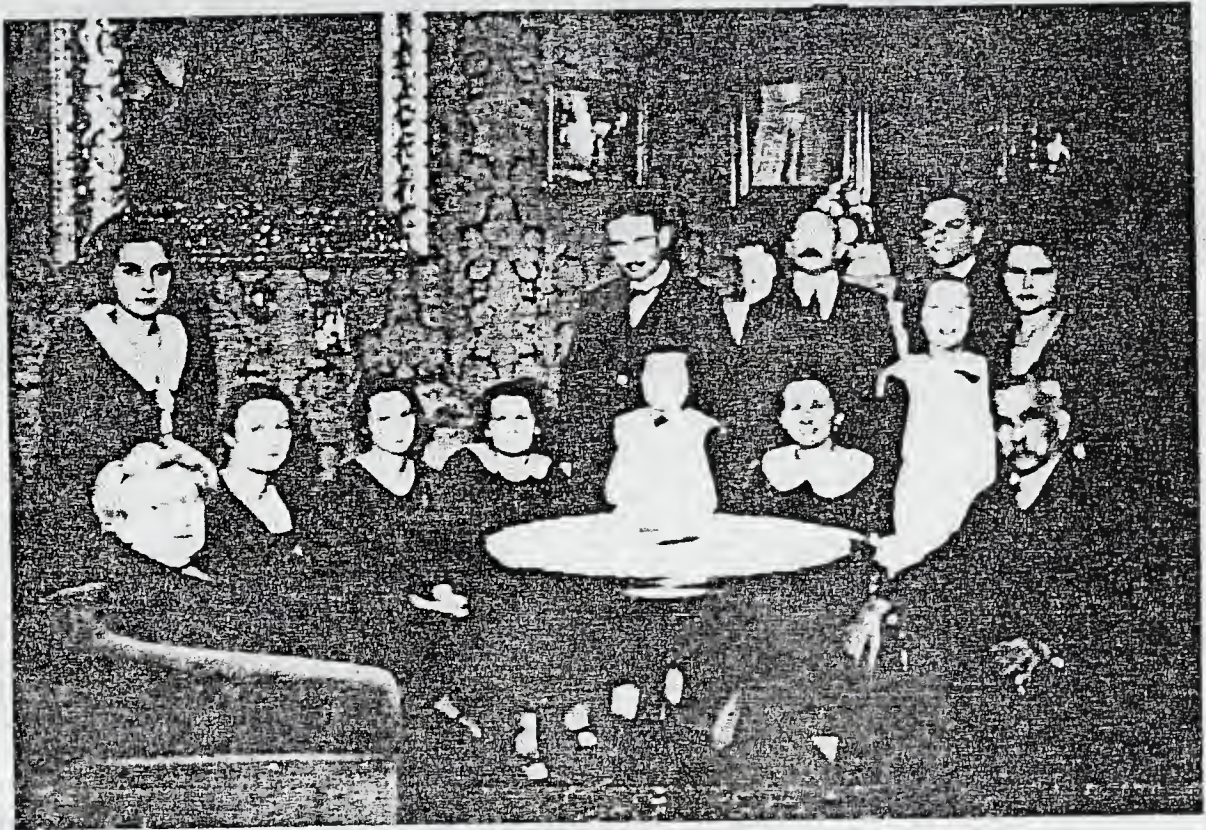


On a ski-tour in the Wienerwald

JAN . 67



Ignaz Brunert, brother of my stepfather,
with his daughter Edith, wife of Charles
Gardner, mother of Stephen and John.



At the home of Ernst Goldschmied in Tynnau in Slovakia. From l. to r.: Lisa, Sali Goldschmied, Gina Ziegler, Hedy, Else Vertes, little Edith Goldschmied, Olly Goldschmied, Max Husserl. Standing, from l. to r.: Sandor Vertes, Ernst Goldschmied, Annie Goldschmied, behind her Adolph, and miss Rougenant.



Stephen and John Gardner, 1964

With a ski-club on instruction in Annaberg near Mariabzell in the Austrian Alps in December 1924.







Tour on the Rax with Hedy, Lisa,
Minnie Landler, and a friend.



With Hedy in the Semmering area.



With Olly, Annie, and Edith Goldschmied
& Hedy skiing in the Wienerwald.

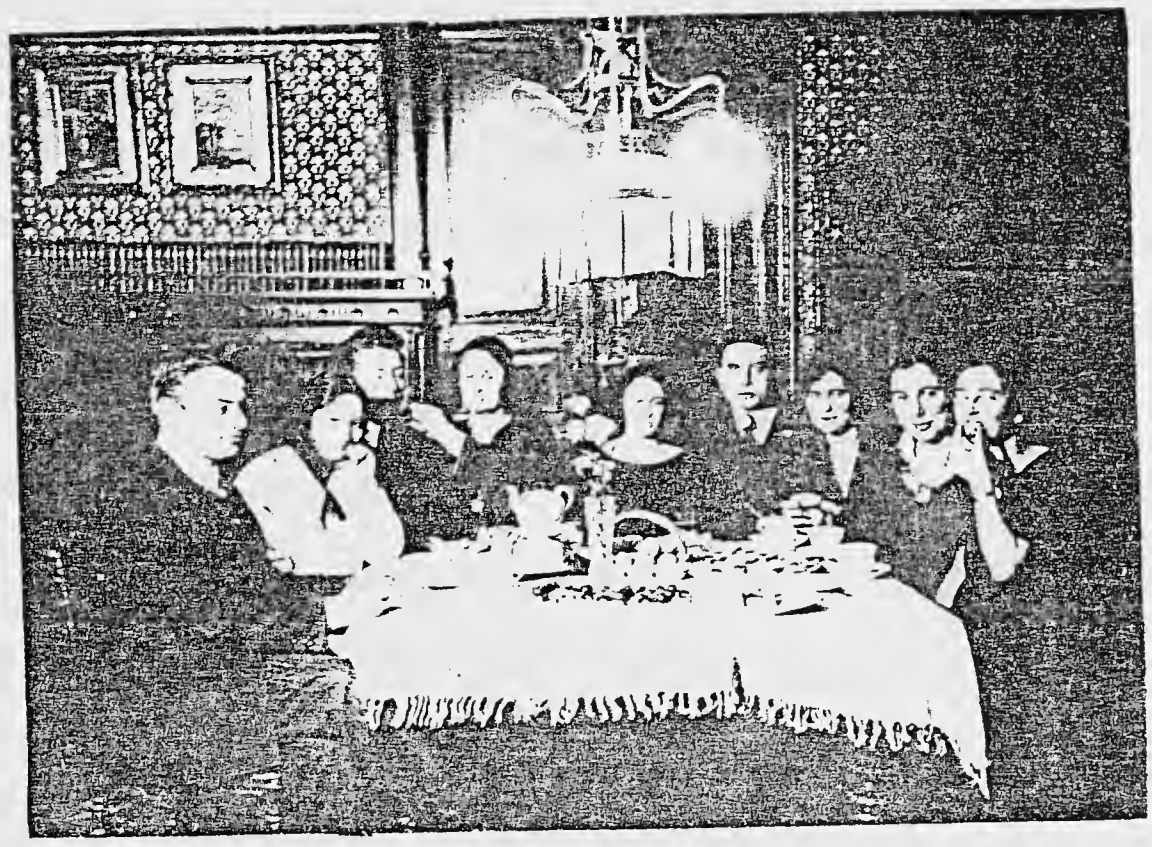


On a hare-hunting tour with Carl in Rumania.

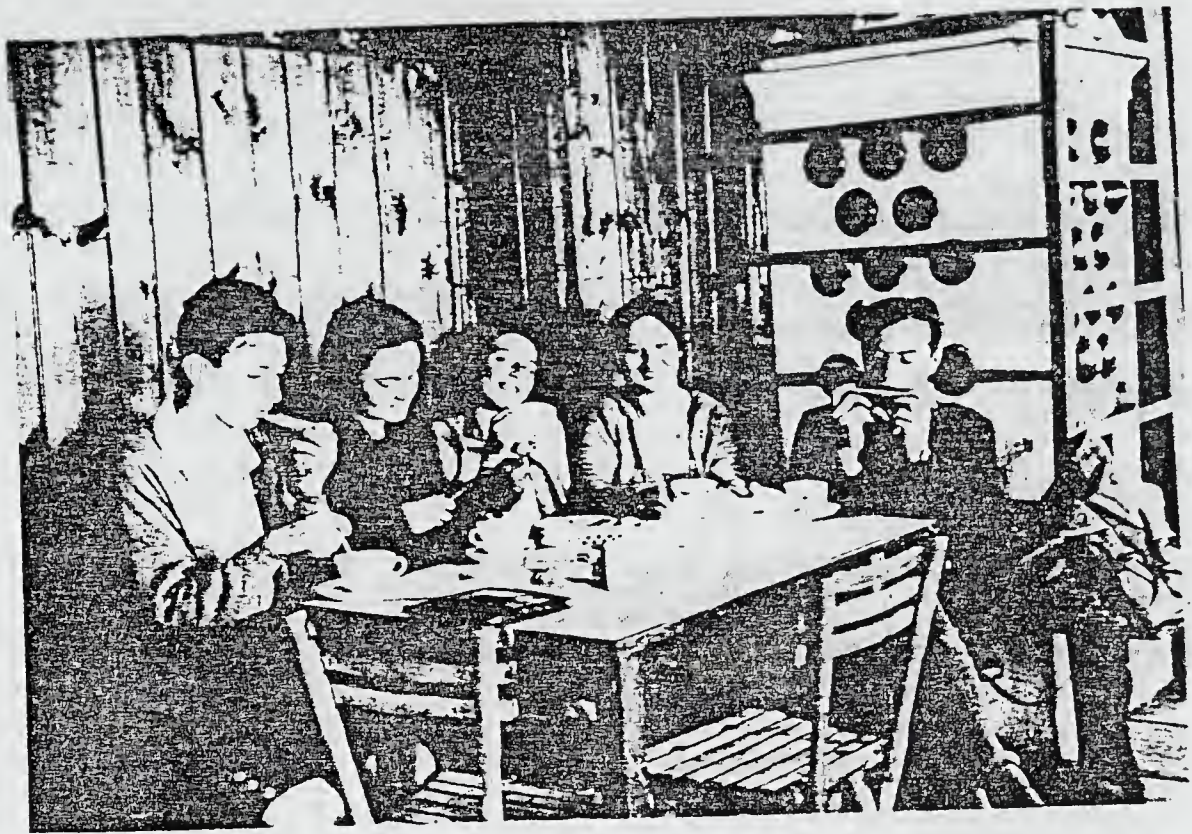
to r.: Adolph, Hedy, Erich, Lisa,
lli Hannak, Simon Hannak, Gina,
ont: A friend, Liese Mueller,
eo Aberbach, Emmy Meisel. Paul
nnak.



L. to r.: Adolph, Hedy, Erich, Gina,
Liese Mueller, Theo Aberbach, Klara
Ziegler, Lisa, Emmy Meisel.



On an excursion in a mountainhouse,
with: From l. to r.: Erich, Mirka Fe-
ninger, Maryla Frisch, Hedy, and my-
self.



a number of young man, who adored her and swarmed around her, also often came to the house, went to shows with her, also came along on excursions.

At that time, my sister Else was in Vienna and lived in the 8th district on Hamerlingplatz in a studio apartment. I remember that she attended the Kunstgewerbe-Schule, which was on the Ringstrasse, and studied painting under professor Mueller-Hoffmann. I often visited her and was amazed about the paintings, which she had produced. I found each and all of them beautiful. She had a wonderful hand and knew how to express herself, and a great sense for beauty. She had a special style, which I never had seen in works of other artists. That was probably the reason, why she had often conflicts with her teacher Mueller-Hoffmann. She told me that he wanted her to paint the way he painted. I not only admired her, but also loved her and she must have felt it. Once I brought Hedy up to her studio, but Hedy did not seem to like her, did not like the way she lived. She used to get up late in the morning, since she went out every evening to a certain coffeehouse, the Opern Cafe, which was in the Operngasse at the corner of the Carlsplatz, where she met many artists, and probably came home late at night. So, she had to sleep longer in the morning. She knew many of the great artists, who came to that coffeehouse. I myself saw once the great composer Franz Lehar in that coffeehouse, but it was in daytime. My mother supported her, since she never could make a living with painting.

I had to study again hard and took the examination of physiology on April 1st, 1922, and received the mark "satisfactory". With that 6th examination I had passed the first

rigorosum.

Till now I did not say much about Hedy's mother, who became later my mother-in-law. She was a wonderful woman and I loved her. She was beautiful, had a good sense of humor, and a heart of gold. There was harmony in the family and she tried to please everybody. Although there was a maid in the house, Mitzi, for many years, who cleaned and cooked, and was treated like a member of the family, Hedy's mother was working hard with shopping, cooking, baking, and taking care of the telephone and making appointments, as the office was in the same apartment. She had it very difficult, since they had to give up one room, the office room, to a neighbor, and had to manage with one room less. I should mention now also Erich, a lovely boy, highly intelligent, good-natured, and friendly. I will have to tell a lot more later about all these fine people, brought up by great, high-minded parents. I loved them all and it is unnecessary to say that I loved Hedy dearly. There came the summer and I went again to Czernowitz for my vacation.

CHAPTER 10

YEARS OF HARD WORK AND PLEASURE

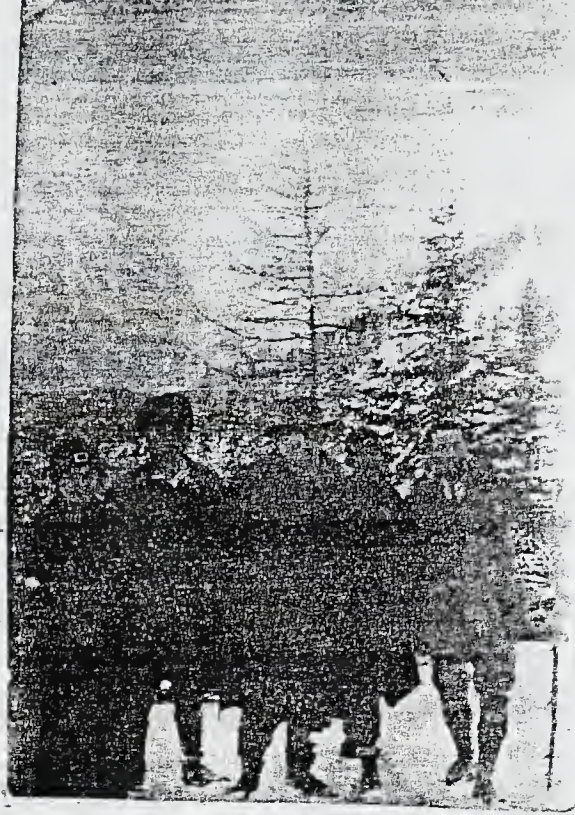
I have to go back now to 1922, when I returned to Vienna. The lectures which I now attended were all about clinical subjects, and I had to prepare myself for the examination of pathologic anatomy, a subject, which I liked every much. I had to attend lectures all day long, also take part in special courses in smaller groups, held by prominent pathologists like Carl Sternberg, Erdheim, and others. The subject was enormous, almost limitless.

In the year 1923, on April 1st, we made a big blunder. We thought, since it was spring, that it was the right time to make an excursion to the Rax, 6000 feet high. We did not know that there was still deep winter there, and were not at all equipped for it, went in regular street shoes and light winter coats. We were six: My future father-in-law, Hedy, Lisa, Erich, myself, and a young man, a mister Fischel. We went really up to the top, where there were great numbers of skiers on the plateau, which was ideal for skiing. The sun was warm and some of the skiers had even taken off their shirts. But with us it was a different story, because on the way up it was snowing a lot and we got quite wet. We were happy to get into the Fischerhuetten and to get a warm meal. But we could not get rooms, but only a so-called Matratzenlager (mattress bunk) and blankets. It was nice to be with all these sportsmen, at least 100 of them, in the dining room, where they all sang till late at night.

But we had a miserable night, it was cold and we were wet.

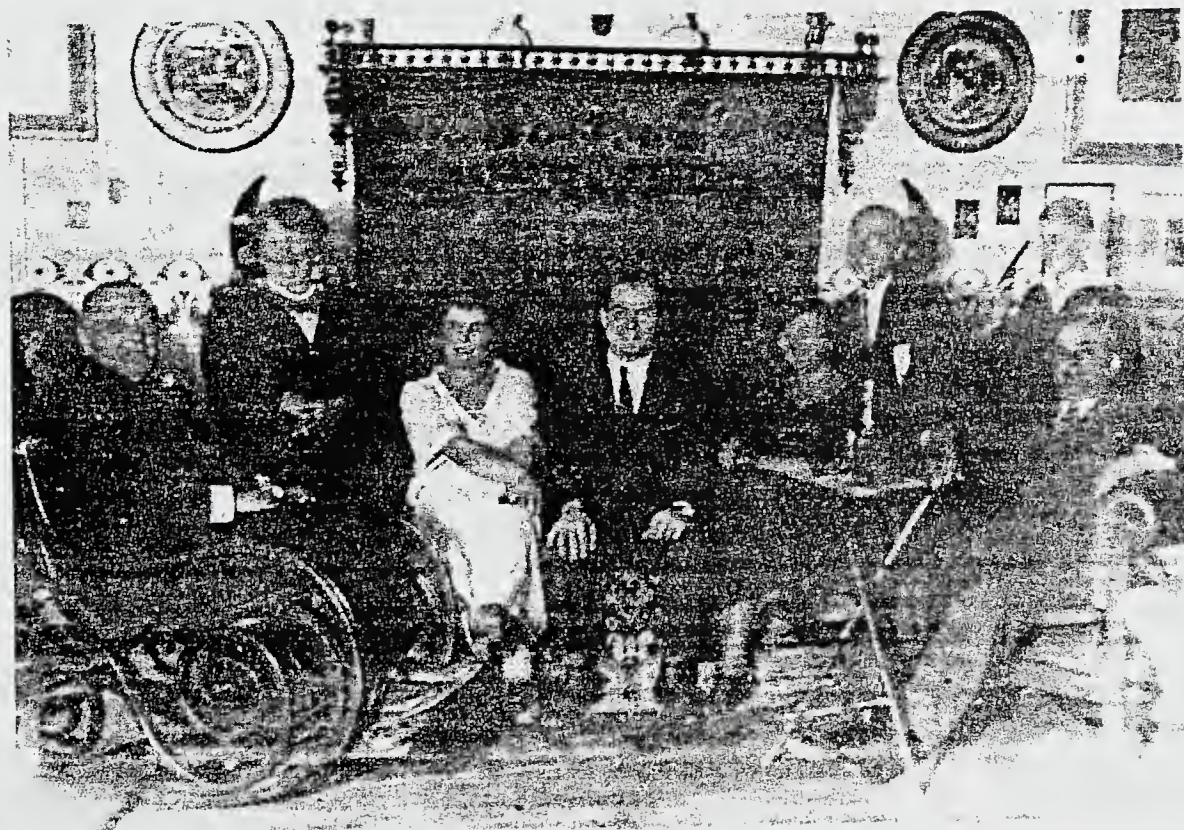


FISCHERHÜTTE MIT KLOSTERWAPPEN. 2.4.23.



Excursion to the Rax, in April, 1923. Hedy, Lisa, myself, my father-in-law, and a Mr. Fischel.

1923. In Czernowitz on vacation. In our living room, Carl singing to Lotte's accompaniment. At the table, from l. to r. My mother, Lotte's parents, Klara and Ludwig Ohrlaender, and Walter. Myself on the right.



From l. to r.: Ludwig and Klara Ohrlaender my mother, myself, Lotte, Carl, Walter, my stepfather, Heinrich Brunwasser.

But we survived, and went down the next day to the railway station and home. I have 3 pictures of that trip, which show us in relatively good spirits.

I signed up for the examination of pathologic anatomy for July 12th, 1923, and passed it with the mark "excellent". Now I went again to Czernowitz for a nice vacation. Carl was already married and working as a partner in the mineral water company, and my family and the family Ohrlaender had formed a very friendly relationship. My stepfather and Carl's father-in-law had formed, together with some other friends, a group, which took to hiking and went every Sunday on trips, sometimes joined by the women, and I joined them too. I have a number of pictures, which show us on such excursions. In one we were eight, standing in a row. Lotte's father was a very fine, pleasant person, and Lotte was very pretty. Two pictures show us in our living room, in one of which one can see some of the furniture, which my father had made in his factory, some 30 years before. In one there is Lotte playing the piano, and Carl is singing, showing off with a wide open mouth and one arm raised high up, apparently trying to reach the high C. Walter is also in the picture, a very handsome boy.

That was the last time that I visited Czernowitz, in the summer of 1923, more than 50 years ago. I did not know, when I left, that it would be the last time that I saw the city and the house, in which I had lived for so many years, happy years of my childhood and later, though only sporadically and for short periods, during my young adulthood. I was often thinking back later on, wishing I had a picture of that house. And now, 50 years later, Carl sent me 2 pictures of that house, which were

found among the papers of my sister Else. He made me really happy. I looked for a long time at these pictures, which produced feelings of melancholy, and I still look at them from time to time. The house does not exist anymore and, anyway, Czernowitz is now a minor city in Russia.

I have other pictures, taken in 1923 in Kritzendorf on the Danube, with big groups of young people in swimming suits, with Hedy, Lisa, Erich, also my future mother-in-law, her sister Susi, and their youngest brother Heini. These pictures must have been taken before I went on vacation. After my return to Vienna, I again studied hard and signed up for 4 examinations, starting with experimental pathology, which I took on November 8th, 1923, and passed with the mark "excellent", and on the same day pharmacology, which I also passed with the mark "excellent". Then came internal medicine on December 17th, which I passed with the mark "satisfactory" and pediatrics on December 22nd, which I passed with the mark "satisfactory".

Right afterwards, we went off with a ski-club for Annaberg near Mariazell in the Austrian Alps. It was the first time we were on skis and it was quite hard, but we had good instructors. We were a nice group of about 80 people. The lanes were not too steep and the snow firm and just right for learning. This club used and instructed us in the so-called Lilienfelder technique, propagated by a Mr. Zdarski. It meant using one long stick with a metal point instead of the usual two sticks. It makes skiing much easier, and especially for beginners. The long stick is very useful as a kind of brake when the going is too fast and makes turning also easier. The technique never became popular and is now long forgotten. We never learned how to ski with 2

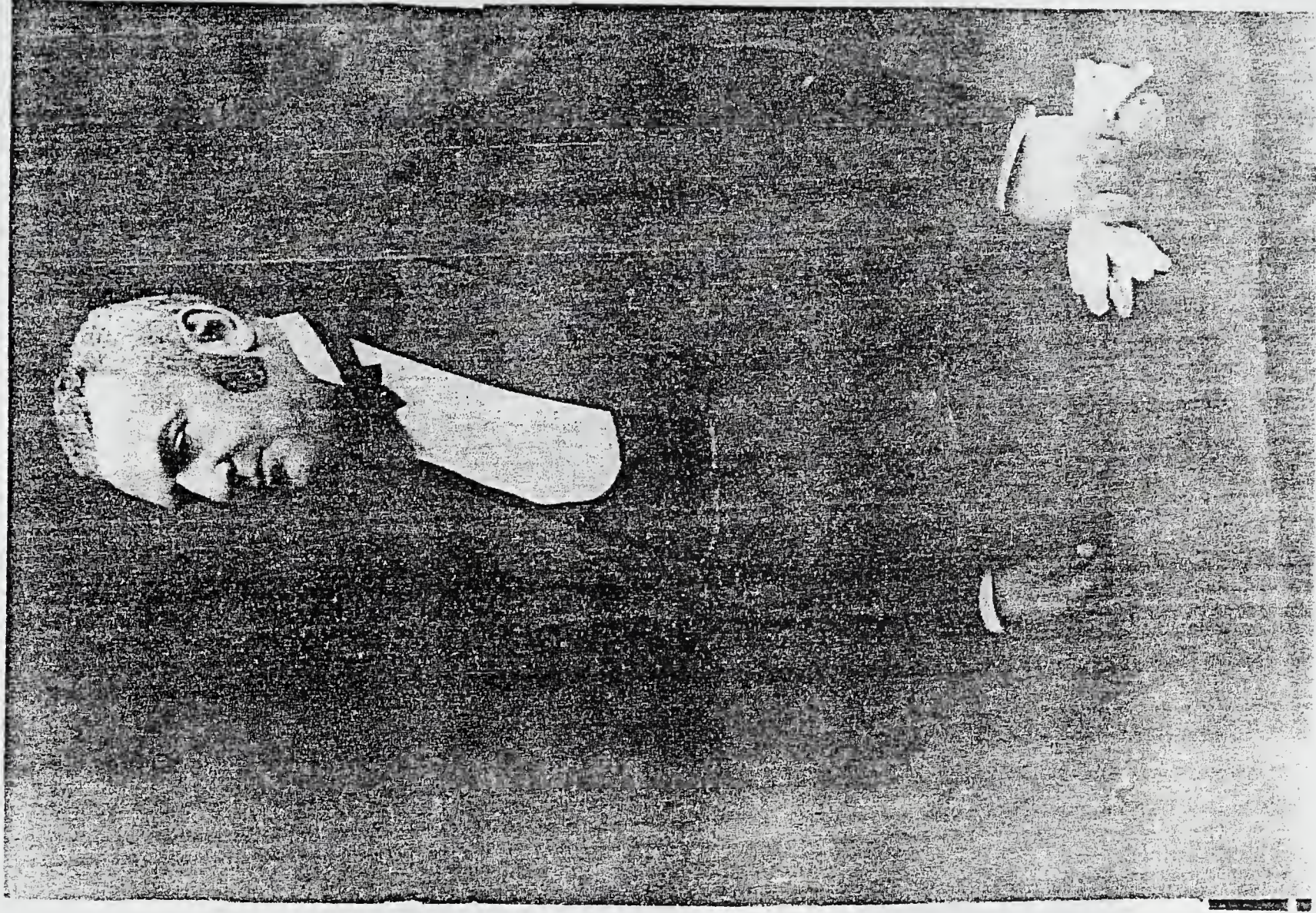
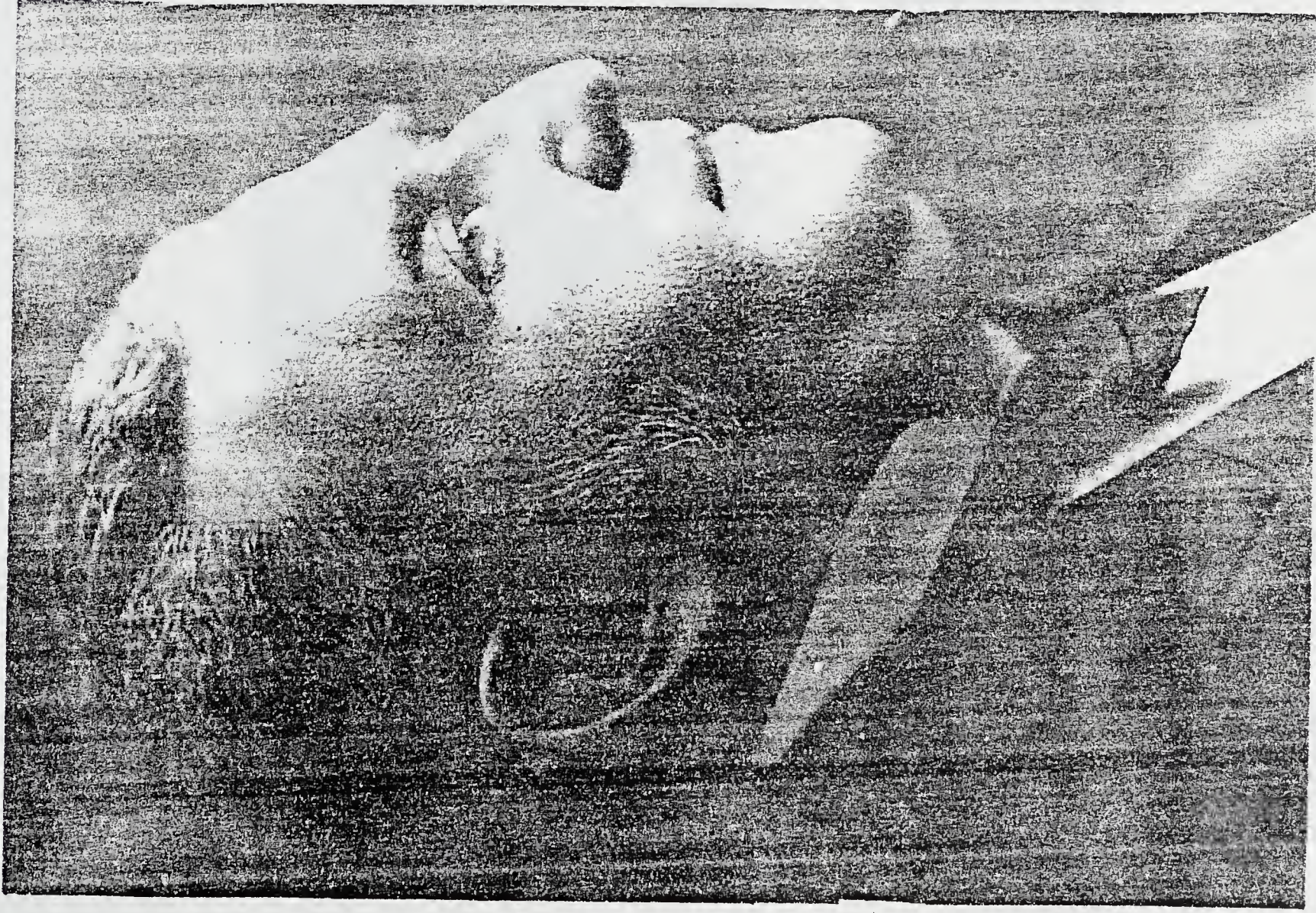
sticks. We went out with the club shortly before Christmas, and spent nice evenings, when we sat together in the not too large diningroom. Unfortunately, the weather was not favorable, it turned warm and the snow melted around the New Year. Nevertheless, we all stayed on for a few more days as planned, and finally returned to Vienna. Later this same winter, we went with a small group again on ski tours. In one picture we are grouped around a big snowman, which we had built, who had a pair of skis under his arm. A few times, Hedy and I went alone on skitours, among others in the Semmering area.

Sometimes Hedy visited me in my room in the Belvederegasse. We did together some ceramic work, which we enjoyed very much. I got some clay from a near-by company, which specialized in ceramic stoves and had big kilns. We formed ashtrays, flower pots, vases, etc., often in the shape of flowers, and took our work then to the ceramic company, where they put our pieces into the kiln, and then also glazed them for us in the colors which we chose. Once we made a bird, modelled after a stuffed blue jay, which I had brought many years before from Czernowitz. It was our most beautiful piece of art, and we have it in one of the last pictures of my in-laws, standing on top of a fireplace.

One more examination of psychiatry on March 3rd, 1924, and I was through with the 2nd rigorosum. This one examination was a repeat. I had taken it 2 or 3 weeks before and had failed, but the second time I passed it. The examiner was the famous Nobel Laureate Wagner-Jauregg.

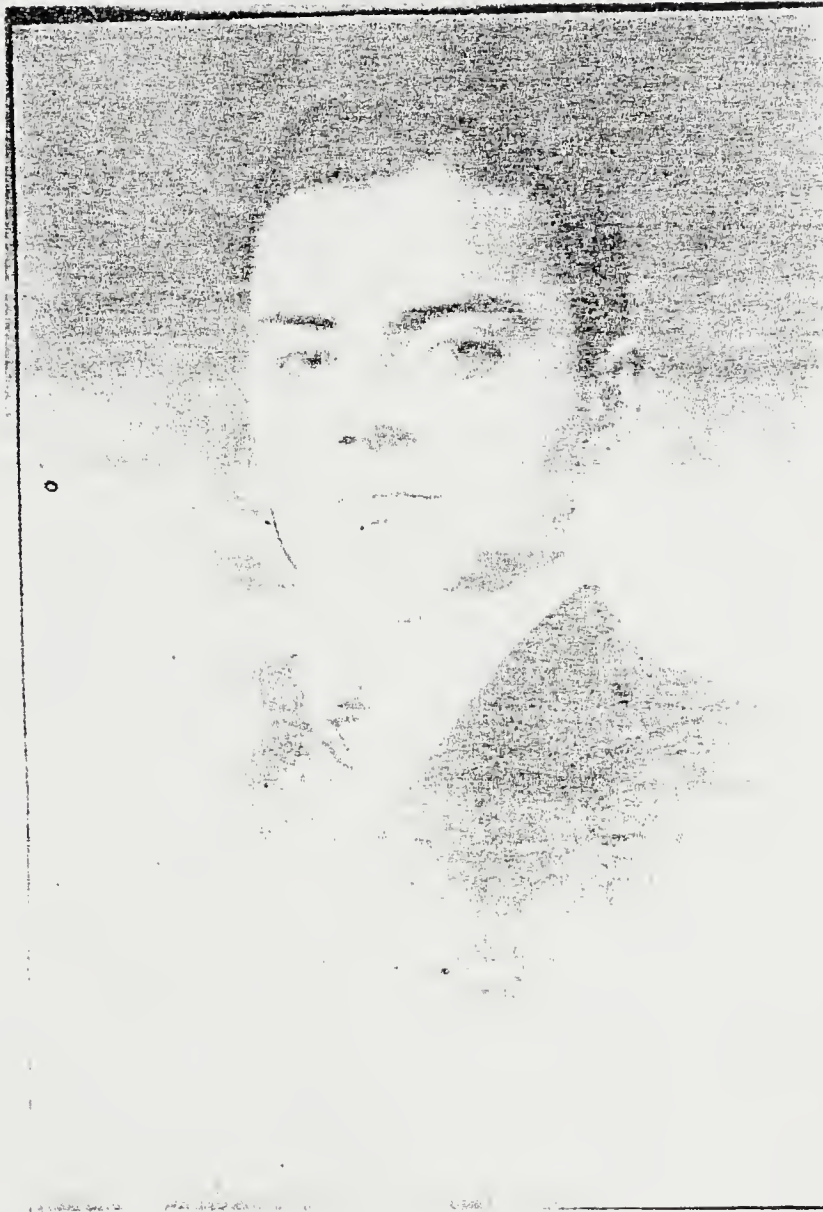
Shortly before we had a sad experience. It was on or about February 23rd, 1924, that I received a telephone call

18
My stepfather, Heinrich Brunwasser, shortly before his death.





Walter, at age 15.



Adolph, ca.1916



Carl, in 1924



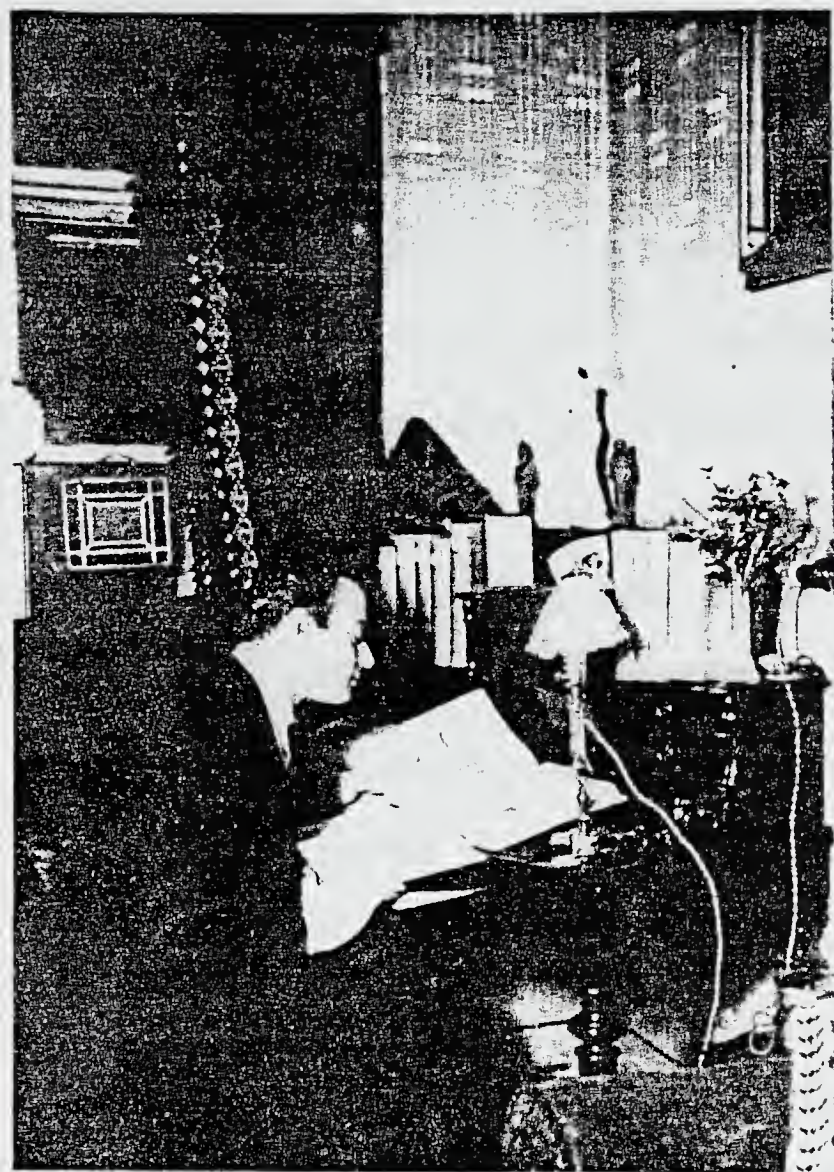
Stepfather Heinrich, in 1924



Bathing party in the Pruth river.
L. to r.: Mr. Grigorovici, mother,
Walter, Mrs. Grigorovici, Samuil
Patras, Alice Patras, Adolph.



Walter c. 10 years old



Preparing myself for an examination. 1924.



A group of participants in an
obstetrical seminar. 1924.

from Czernowitz and was told that my stepfather was seriously ill with yellow jaundice, and that he and my mother will take the next train for Vienna, and that I should make a reservation for a bed in a hospital. They both arrived the next day and I brought them from the railway station to the clinic Eiselsberg, the best surgical clinic in Vienna. He had severe jaundice and it was clear that it must have been a cancer with obstruction of the main bile duct. He was operated on by a fine surgeon, who found a tumor of the pancreas and all he could do was to connect the gallbladder with the stomach in order to free the flow of bile, and also to make a connection of the stomach with a loop of the small intestines. The next day, when I visited him with my mother, he was in a very weak condition. Intravenous feeding was not known in those days. And when we came again the next following day, on the 27th of February early in the morning, he was dead and his bed was empty. I had the opportunity to talk with professor Erdheim, whom I knew very well, who had just finished the autopsy, and he told me that it was a large cancer of the pancreas, which had obstructed the bile duct.

We returned very sadly to Else's apartment, where my mother had stayed. We made arrangements for a short ceremony at the cemetery and also for a cremation of the body. My poor mother stayed a few days more with us, and then returned with the urn in her baggage to Czernowitz. She was now a second time a widow. Little Walter was only 12 years old. How good was it, that Carl was there and could continue with the business, otherwise everything would have been lost.

The next two examinations I took in a rather rapid suc-

cession, dermatology on March 24th, 1924, with the mark "satisfactory" and ophthalmology on May 22nd with the mark "satisfactory" also.

At about the beginning of June 1924, we went on an excursion to the Rax. It meant taking the train to Payerbach and then walking. There was no cablecar yet in those days. As far as I remember, we took the so-called Schlangenweg (snake walk), which was the least steep, but longest ascending route, and took us to the Kronprinz Rudolf Haus. We were five; Hedy, Lisa, Erich, a Mr. Aberbach, and myself. We wanted to go after lunch to the Otto Haus, walking on the plateau. But there was a shorter route, the Bismarck Steig, - which Hedy and I decided to take, along a very steep wall. There was at the start a warning sign that the Bismarck Steig was not safe before June. But we disregarded the warning and went on. We had to hold on to a strong metal rope, held in place by strong metal arms, driven ^{into} the rock, and for the feet there were also strong metal arms in the wall. It was fun in the beginning and we advanced rather fast. Things became difficult, when a few people came in the opposite direction, as we had to move around another person or the other person around us. The wall was a vertical drop of 2000 or 3000 feet. But then, there was a dilemma. The rope was covered by a snowfield, about 20 feet wide and that meant that we had to cross that field at an angle of about 45 degrees, with nothing to hold on, except our canes. It was frightening and we decided not to walk over the snow, which was firm, but rather around the lower edge, where there was a field of loose rocks. It was a dangerous thing to do that. Hedy was a little ahead of me and

went well across the field of rocks. But when I followed her, the whole field of rocks started to move, and I too. I saw the end of my life, because 8 or 10 feet down there was the end and the steep wall again. I grabbed my cane with both hands and sunk it vertically into the stones, and miraculously stopped the movement of the field of rocks. I had yelled when it happened, but Hedy had not heard it. Using the cane, I went over to Hedy and had again firm ground under my feet. But the next moment, something terrible happened. Two young men, coming in the opposite direction, were crossing the snow field, one man walking in front and loosening the snow with an ice-breaker for the other man. I had seen him doing it. But that man lost his halt on the snow and rock-field before our eyes and came sliding down with great speed and disappeared in the depth. Hedy and I thought we would loose our minds. But there was nothing we could do. We saw people far down on the Schlangenweg looking up, seeing that man fall. Soon afterwards a rescue expedition arrived and they went down with strong ropes. But that man was dead, and we read about him the next day in the newspapers. We met our people at the Ottobach and told them the story.

On the way down from the Ottobach I had a mishap. I tripped over a stone and injured a ligament of an ankle. It swelled up and I could only walk the rest of the way with my arms around the shoulders of Lisa and the other young man. We advanced slowly and reached the railway station in Payerbach, where we had to wait for the train back to Vienna. Coming home, I went right away to bed and applied cold dressings to my foot.

The next day, I could not walk, and what was very bad

about that was that I was supposed to start on that Monday my seminar at the department of gynecology and obstetrics. I called them up and told them about my mishap. They told me that it would not matter if I missed one day, and that I should try to come the next day. Bed rest helped and I was much better the next following day and I went there to start the seminar. We were 10 or 11 students, of whom I have 3 pictures in my album, who had to live for one week or may be 10 days in the institute and participate in examinations of pregnant women and observation, when they gave birth. We were often called during the night and had to rush to the delivery room to see the process of childbirth. I took my examination of gynecology and obstetrics on July 18th, 1924, and passed it with the mark "satisfactory".

For my next summer vacation I did not plan to go to Czer-nowitz. Another rare opportunity came up. Two cousins of Hedy, Hella Ziegler and her sister Marianne had planned to spend their vacation in Vorarlberg in Gargellen, a small village deep in the Alps, and encouraged us to spend the last 10 days or two weeks there with them. We happily accepted and were soon on our way, took a night-train, hardly slept and arrived very early in the morning in Schruns. From there we had to walk about 15 miles to Gargellen. There was no bus. We were tired and very hungry and hoped to get somewhere a cup of coffee. In Schruns there was only one inn, which we saw from far away, and when we arrived there, there was a sign on the house, which said: "Entrance forbidden to Jews and dogs". We didn't believe our eyes. We had heard about such signs in Germany, where the antisemitism was developing rapidly, but that was 1924 and long before Hitler,

and it was in Austria. We couldn't do anything, there was no village between Schruns and Gargellen and we had to continue walking, with our hungry stomachs on a rather steep road. As we advanced on the road, a wonderful world of mountains came into view, a landscape we had never seen anything like it before. To the west the Raeticon mountain group appeared in all her majesty, to the south the Madrisa group, and to the east the Ritzenspitzen. It was a splendour, which let us forget our hunger and tiredness. It took us about 5 hours till we arrived in the beautiful hotel Madrisa in Gargellen, joyfully expected by Hedy's two cousins, and just at the right time for lunch.

The next 8 or 10 days we spent there with them were a real pleasure and we enjoyed the many walks through the meadows full of beautiful flowers, the like of which we had never seen before, like the chocolate flower, which really had the color and scent of chocolate, different varieties of gentian, arnica, and many others. Sometimes Hedy and I went on smaller excursions without the cousins. After all, we were young and in love, and the cousins were very sympathetic.

Once I was called to see a patient, and although I was not yet a doctor, I went there. I don't remember anymore what kind of case it was. Some chronic disease, which kept the woman in bed for a long time. It could have been a case of tuberculosis. After more than 50 years it is difficult to remember that. Anyway, I gave her some advice, and to my astonishment she insisted on paying me a fee and I had to take it. It was the first money I made in my medical carrier.

Once Hedy and I went on a bigger tour and this experience we remember too well, since we had told the story many times.

We went one day over the border to Switzerland and that was a risky undertaking, since we did not have passports, and we were told that people who were caught were put in jail. The day before, we managed to get some Swiss money. The next day, we started out very early and went the steep road up to the Schlap-piner Joch, which means a passage between mountains, and that was the border. We went then down on the Swiss side, also quite a steep road and came to the village Schlappin. The houses appeared empty, not a soul was visible. We understood that all folks were up on the pasture grounds in summer. Another hour or so of walking downhill and the town of Klosters came into view. The railroad station was right there at the end of our road. We had planned to go to Davos, to see that famous place. We asked for 2 tickets, but it turned out that we did not have enough Swiss money. What we had was sufficient to go to St. Wolfgang. A look at the map showed us that it was only a few miles from there to Davos-Dorf, and so we took the tickets to St. Wolfgang, and soon the train came. We got out in St. Wolfgang and walked then to Davos, hoping to find there a bank to change our Austrian money. We found a bank, but it was closed at noon and opened at 2 P.M. Across the street was a nice coffeehouse and we went there and ordered among other things chocolate. It was the best, we ever drank and a big pitcher full. We waited there till the bank opened and changed enough money to pay for the lunch and for the return trip to Klosters. We had time to walk around and also to Lake Davos. We then took the train to Klosters. It was already late in the afternoon, when we arrived there. We looked around carefully, and to our dismay saw a gendarm, who was standing with his rifle in the midst of the

road, which we were supposed to take up to the Schlappiner Joch. It was a terrible problem. We kept watching the gendarm, but he did not move. The road was narrow, with steep lanes on both sides. But I noticed that there was a kind of furrow behind him and parallel to the road. The furrow ended about 100 yards above the place, where he stood and joined there the road. It was not deep, but we saw that if we bent down, he could not see us. So we went rapidly to that furrow and walked up, very carefully not to make any noise, all the time bent down. When we passed behind him, we were only about 15 feet away from him. When we reached the end of the furrow, we had to get out and run on the road. Looking back, we saw him running too. We thought he would shoot, but he did not. He had no reason, since we were only running and in the direction of the border of Switzerland, and his duty was only to watch that nobody should enter the country over the mountain pass. We lost sight of him and kept running. It was terribly strenuous to run uphill for at least half an hour, till we reached Schlappin. There we went behind a house and sat down on a bench, or rather collapsed. We had still some food in our rucksack and ate it, boiled eggs and bread or whatever it was. Then we had to start walking again, it was late and we did not want to walk in the dark. So, we reached the Schlappiner Joch and went as fast as we could the last few miles to the hotel, arrived there when it was already dark. That was quite a trip! In hind-sight a stupid thing to do. Young people do such things.

Another exciting experience was a trip which I made with a man who was a guest in the same hotel in Gargellen. He had

asked me the day before whether I would like to go with him on a mountain climbing tour the next day, and I immediately agreed. We started early in the morning and our aim was the Madrisa Horn, which was close to the Madrisa Spitze, but a little less high. The exact height I don't know anymore, but I assume that it was about 6500 feet. We ascended in the direction of the Schlappiner Joch, but then went south. He was an experienced alpinist, about 50 years old and well equipped for a climbing tour. He was a German, like most of the other guests in the Hotel Madrisa, and a very interesting man. I remember that we were molested by flies, while we walked. The path became quite steep and exerting. When we reached a snow-field, I tried not to walk on the snow, but he was in front of me and the snow was firm and the incline not bad. But I still remembered the experience I had in the same year on the Rax and told him about it. After crossing a large snow-field, we came to a rocky edge of that field and stayed on it. There were difficult rocks to pass and that man gave in, came over to me and fastened the climbing-rope around my waist and then also around his, and then went ahead of me. The climbing was quite arduous and we had to rest a few times. The final climb to the top of that mountain was quite steep, but we made it. There was a wooden cross at the top, held in place by a heap of large rocks. We had a wonderful view from there of many of the giants of the Austrian and Swiss Alps, the Ortler, the highest mountain in Austria, not far away, the Madrisa Spitze quite near, the Scesa Plana in the north, and in the southwest the Bernina group, the Jungfrau, and the Matterhorn. It was very windy there and we did not stay long. I took a pic-

ture there, and then we started to descend, which was in many places more difficult than the ascent, and reached the hotel in the late afternoon. It was a wonderful experience. A few days later, we left the hotel with our cousins Hella and Marianne for good. Hedy and I had planned to continue our vacation on our own. Later on, when we were in Vienna, I offered the film of the snapshot I had taken of the Madrisa Horn to a postcard publishing house. There was no picture of the Madrisa Horn in existence. They offered me 25 Austrian Schillings and I accepted. I never saw the postcard, nor do I have any of the many pictures which I had taken on that vacation trip. All left in Vienna and lost. We said good-bye to our cousins and left, with the intention of climbing up to the Scesa Plana, 9000 feet high.

I had a good map and we walked up all day long, till we reached a tourist house, where we got a room and a good meal. It was full of tourists. We were very tired and went soon to bed. Early in the morning, around 4 o'clock, we were awakened by the noise of many people, walking with their heavy mountain shoes on the wooden floors and stairs. I went out to ask why they had gotten up that early, and I was told that all of them wanted to be up on the Scesa Plana in time to see the wonderful spectacle of the sun-rise. We wanted to see that too, of course, and were soon dressed and on our way, following other people, since it was still dark, and arrived at the top of the Scesa Plana in time to see the wonderful spectacle of the sun-rise. There were great many people up there, also many who had come from the Swiss side, since the Scesa Plana and the Rhaeticon group form the border between Austria and

Switzerland. The young Swiss people spoke the Swiss German, of which we didn't understand a single word. It was wonderful to see all the high mountains tinged red. We had a special map, which showed the silhouette of the Alps, as seen from the Scesa Plana, and could distinguish all the giants up to the Mont Blanc. We stayed quite a few hours there, enjoying the view and the air. There was also a glacier there, and we saw a few chamois, a relative of the goat, crossing the glacier. Looking down into Switzerland, we saw the city of Chur. I forgot to mention the marmots, which we often saw, rodents which are relatives of the squirrels, but much bigger and without the long tail. They live in the high mountain areas in holes, and there is always one of them watching and whistles, when somebody comes into its view, and all of them disappear in their holes. But a few times we managed to see them roaming around, when we were very careful when reaching a rim and looking over it, before they could see us.

Coming down, we went again into the tourist house for a meal and then on to Bludenz, where we took a train going west to Bregenz, to take a look at the Bodensee. It was wasted time and money, since the Bodensee didn't look different from other lakes. We then went back eastward to Innsbruck, which we had not seen before and stayed one day. This time it was not wasted time and money, as Innsbruck is a beautiful city. Then on to Vienna, where we had a lot to tell about this most beautiful trip, which we had enjoyed enormously.

Soon I had to return to my books to prepare myself for the last three examinations. The first one was of legal medicine, which I took on November 6th, 1924, and passed with the

mark "satisfactory", the next one was of hygiene on November 7th, 1924, which I passed with the mark "excellent", and the last one of surgery on December 5th, which I passed with the mark "satisfactory". This one was also a repeat examination, having failed about two weeks before, when I had the misfortune of cutting one of my fingers while performing an amputation of the forefoot on a cadaver, when the knife slipped in my hand. I therefore had to repeat the examination and passed it. This was the last examination of the 3rd rigorosum.

⊗ Here I want to insert a very special experience, which I had with a patient of my future father-in-law, when I was very young, shortly after my graduation, but not practicing yet. I was visiting with Hedy, and I was about to leave for my domicile in Belvedere-gasse in the 4th district, when a telephone call came and my father-in-law was asked to come to a patient who was seriously ill. He took off immediately and asked me to accompany him. I had my doctor's bag with me and took it along. I remember the address, it was Fugbachgasse 10, but not anymore the name of the patient. I will call her Mrs. Meyer. We went there on foot, of course, and found there an elderly woman, in her 70th, lying on her back, unconscious, breathing heavily, and masses of pink foam coming out of her mouth and nose, the eyes open, directed upwards. The pulse could hardly be felt, but was very rapid. On auscultation the heart beat could not be heard, only the rattling noise of the fluid in the lungs. It was a typical case of pulmonary edema. I had ampoules of Digitalis with me and a syringe was rapidly sterilized in boiling water. My father-in-law consented that I give her an intravenous injection of Digitalis. At that time Digalen or Digipuratum was generally used. There were many people in the apartment. This lady had 10 children, most of them married and living in Vienna, and they all kept coming in cars. One of them was a doctor, whom I knew personally. He was a prominent member of the staff of the Arbeiter-Krankenkasse (Workmen's Sickness Fund), director of the prescription department. He was standing next to the bed, constantly wiping off the foam coming out of the patient's mouth and nose. I proposed to make a venepuncture and take out a pint of blood. This was usually done in such cases, to relieve the heart of a part of the load it had to drive, and would have helped very fast. But Dr. Meyer objected. I then proposed another Digitalis injection. He said:

"O.K. But this will be the last one. I don't want my mother to be tortured anymore. There is no help, you know it, in such a case. The second Digitalis injection had no effect. I had in my bag an ampoule of Strophantus, similar in its effect to Digitalis, but much stronger. I filled my syringe with Strophantus, and when I proposed it, Dr. Meyer got very angry and forbade to do anything. The apartment was now filled with people, at least 20 were there, but not in the room where the patient was. Liquor was served and I was called to the next room and got a small glass-full too. They spoke already about the funeral. They had opened the windows of the bedroom, which was usually done, when a dead person was in the room. Dr. Meyer was busy wiping off the foam and he had also put a folded towel over the patients eyes, as he could not stand the fixed look of her eyes. Dr. Meyer was then also called to the next room to get a glass of liquor. That moment I used to administer the Strophantus injection, as fast as I could. I had just finished it, when he came back into the room. He shouted at me and was very angry. I could not say a word. After a short while, I felt the pulse and it seemed to get stronger. Very soon the patient moved one arm, then the other one. Then she coughed and an enormous amount of foam came out flying. She then opened her eyes wide and looked around. All the people came into the room, shouting and showing their happiness, getting busy with rubbing the patients arms and hands, washing her face with water and alcohol and kissing her. Dr. Meyer was not saying anything anymore. My father-in-law and I packed up our things, said "Good-bye" to everybody and left. How I got back to my domicile in the 4th district, I don't know anymore, as the tramway was not running anymore after midnight. Perhaps I walked, as I often did before, which took about 1 hour.

Next day's news about the patient were good. They had called the famous cardiologist Professor Wenckebach for a conference, we used to call it consilium between the 3 doctors, the professor, my father-in-law and Dr. Meyer. The professor lauded me, my father-in-law told me, and had said that in such a case the doctor never should give up and give many injections, till the heart finally responds.

This lady lived then 8 more years, till she died from a stroke. It was the first time that I saved a life as a doctor. It happened many times thereafter, about 8 times or 10 in the case of Mrs. Gash, Selma Freudenthal's mother, always at night.

It so happened that I saw Dr. Meyer again many years later in Havana, Cuba. He had just come there as a refugee and he had me called to his house. He was suffering from angina pectoris and I could help him with medication. I told him that I knew him from Vienna and asked him whether ^{he} did not recognize me. I mentioned his mother and then he knew and we started to reminisce. I did not hear from him anymore.

CHAPTER 11

HEDY AND I ENGAGED. HEDY'S FAMILY.

In the meantime, efforts were underway to get me the Austrian citizenship. I could have registered for the graduation, but that would have been the wrong thing to do, as I already explained before, because I would have graduated as a foreigner and could never have practiced medicine in Austria. So, I postponed it. My future father-in-law was all his life a social democrat and had among his friends and patients some influential people, who were in important positions in the local government. Through their efforts, I finally got the citizenship, and the certificate had the date of March 2nd, 1925. Immediately afterwards, I applied for the graduation, and the ceremony took place at the University on March 13th, 1925. For the same day, my engagement to Hedy was prepared, and after we returned from the University, a fine lunch was served by my future mother-in-law, with many members of the family present, including some uncles and aunts of Hedy's. It was a nice affair, in which an uncle of Hedy, Josef Feingold, the father of John and Erich Forster, made a speech, in which he said among other things that they all were putting a jewel into my hands, to take well care of it, a speech which required a little speech also by me, for



Hedy's paternal grandparents
Moses and Theresa Ziegler, née Blum, c.1860



Hedy's maternal grandparents
Bernhard and Fanny Feingold, née Korsower, c.1900



Otto Feingold.



Betty Reisberg.



Standing, l.to r.: Heinrich Feingold, Theo Aberbach, Josef Feingold, Lisa Ziegler, Elsa Feingold, Dr.Isidore Reisberg, Otto Feingold. Sitting: Adolph Mechner, Hedy Ziegler, Gina Ziegler, Betty Reisberg, Erich Ziegler. Sitting on the ground: John and Erich Forster

which I was not prepared and which brought at the end tears into my eyes. Everybody was elated, there was a lot of kissing and hugging going on. I was now a doctor of medicine, and not anymore a doctorandus, as which my father-in-law used to introduce me to his patients.

Since I was now engaged to Hedy, and was about to become a member of her family, it is appropriate that I describe her family as thoroughly as I had described my own family and that will include her grandparents on both her father's and her mother's side and their children and grandchildren. I will start with Hedy's grandparents on her father's side.

Hedy did not meet the grandparents on her father's side, but she told me a few interesting details about them. Their names were Moses and Theresa Ziegler, nee Blum. They lived in Moravia, a province of Austria, which is now a province of Tchechoslovakia, in Gross-Meseritsch. Her grandfather was born in Neustadt1. They had 17 children and they all grew up to become successful people. Their names and the names of their husbands resp. wives and their children and grandchildren can be seen in chronological order in the attached family tree. The oldest son was Hermann and the youngest was Markus Ziegler. Hedy's father Benjamin was the 15th child. The family tree of the Zieglers was written by Lisa about 40 years ago, later re-adjusted by Hella Leinkauf, nee Ziegler and also by Othmar Ziegler, and many names of grandchildren and great-grandchildren were added later. The names of some members could not be remembered, and the birth dates and dates of death were not exactly known and had to be left out. Copies of this biography will be sent later, when the work will be finished, to many members of the family,

who are now living, and it will be up to them to continue the work up to the present time, or if they will not be interested, to leave it as it is.

I will concentrate on one branch of the Ziegler family, Dr. Benjamin Ziegler and his wife Regina, nee Feingold, and her family. I will write about that part more in detail and that alone is an enormous work. Should I die before it is finished, I hope my descendants will continue where I have stopped. Hedy's grandfather, Moses Ziegler, died in the year 1898 and reached a very high age, about 90 years. When the youngest child, Markus, was born, it was Yom Kippur, and the mother was alone in the house, and she died on account of a hemorrhage. The grandfather re-married later. He was very religious and he had a room in his house set up for praying, like a little temple. There was much tragedy in his life too. One son, Max, was murdered in 1890 by a mad man, while standing on the platform of the railway station in Kufstein in Tyrol. The grandfather was also a very charitable man, helped poor people, invited them on high holidays to participate at meals. Some of his children became very rich, some were bankers, lawyers, manufacturers, one was director of a sugar factory. When I came into the family, Hedy had about 100 cousins.

Her father had studied medicine at the University in Vienna, and he was 40 years old when he married her mother. He was 19 years older than she. He was a man of high moral principles, admired and adored by his relatives and his patients, helpful to the poor, whom he often treated without payment. He was a wonderful man and an experienced practitioner. He must have had a fine medical education, since he had a good way

1925

of examining his patients. He was generally in high esteem as a good diagnostician, and was therefore quite a busy doctor. From the first moment I came into his house, he was extremely friendly towards me, and seemed to be proud that his daughter had found a medical student (and future doctor). In those days, doctors had to make frequently house calls, and soon he took me along when he visited patients, introducing me, as I said, as doctorandus, which means future doctor. I learnt a lot from him. In the office, he showed me how to examine patients by percussion and auscultation. He had cases of tuberculosis, emphysema, and, of course, of congestive heart disease, and often I had to answer questions, when I hardly knew anything about anatomy. When I accompanied him on his house calls, I saw serious cases of tuberculosis, breast cancer, pemphigus, lupus erythematosus, one terminal case of melanosarcoma, leukemia, etc. He even taught me how to write prescriptions. Very often I was unhappy, because I came to visit Hedy and he pulled me away from her, either into his office or on house calls. But what I learned from him was really invaluable. This went on for years, even when I was already a doctor of medicine. Often he sent children of poor people with a pot to Hedy's mother for soup. He often put rolls or bread in his pockets, when he went out to visit patients. He was highly educated and very good in mathematics.

Hedy's mother, Regina, called Gina, was a fine and lovely lady, with a great sense of humor, adored by all the relatives and friends, always friendly, and her home open all the time for visitors, who were, the moment they came, invited to participate in the meals, which, since she was a wonderful cook,

were exquisite. They had a nice social life, had great many friends, went out to parties, and they were well liked, wherever they went. Every summer they went with the children, when they were still small, to nice places like Voeslau, Baden bei Wien, Hochleithen, Kierling, later to the Semmering and the Salzkammergut.

The father was a physician of the so-called Arbeiter-Krankenkasse, also of the Railroadworkers-Krankenkasse. He had the office together with the living quarters, but only one room for the office. They had once to give up one room of their apartment to a neighbor, and from then on the patients had to sit in a small hallway, since there was no waiting room anymore, and the piano had to be in the office room. But he was an unusually modest man and that did not seem to bother him, nor did the patients mind it. They all adored him and he treated them as if they would be members of his family. As a doctor, he had great knowledge and experience. When he had a serious case, he was often sitting for hours at the patients bedside. His house calls he made most of the time on foot, sometimes by using the streetcar. Time and again, when I was visiting there, taking part in a meal, he called me into the office, when he had an interesting case, let me examine the patient and explained the case. What I had learned from him I never could have learned from books, and long before I got my doctors degree, I knew things, which took others years to learn. He took me often along on house calls and most of his patients knew me already and later became my patients, after he retired from practice. ^{see page 195.} 

He was quite corpulent, was bald, and had a small grey moustache. He used to walk slowly, moving from one side to the

other. He rarely wore a coat in winter, but wore warm gloves on cold days. He dressed in general rather sloppily, but could dress up well, when going out in the evening to a restaurant. That happened sometimes, and then it was a group of 3 or 4 doctors with their wives, like Dr. and Mrs. Koch, Dr. and Mrs. Wolken, Dr. and Mrs. Sternberg, and others. I was a frequent participant, and at the end one of them paid the entire bill, often enough my father-in-law. He liked good food and my mother-in-law did her best to satisfy him. He was careful with money and did not like it, when she put too many things on the table, but what she did was always excellent. He always was very economical and tried to be an example of it to others. It was a rule that everybody ate all there was on the plate, and there were never left-overs to be thrown away. But in general, he was noble and was respected for it. He did not allow harsh words or gossip, and treated his children with respect, also the young people, who came into the house. Straightforwardness was one of his most important characteristics, and he demanded it also from others. I remember a scene, when we were once sitting together, on a day when he had received a bigger cash payment from a patient. He put it on purpose into his breast pocket in such a way that a few bills stuck out a little. My mother-in-law saw it and said: "What do I see here?" and pulled the money out. He pretended anger, but soon laughed too with all the others. That was one special way of giving money to her for shopping. He did not have an easy life. There was the family and often, very often, visitors, including me. He was a good chess player and a great mathematician. He disliked people who were not only not poor, were, as we say, comfortable, and

still tried to take advantage of him or other people, for whom he had a special expression: "Dreckfresser", which means something like eaters of excrements, the same as he called people who liked to swallow large numbers of pills: "Pillenfresser". And he strongly disliked people who smelled from perfume. When such a person sat down next to him in a streetcar, he moved away from her as far as possible, holding his nose tightly closed with two fingers, so that that person would possibly understand why he had moved away. And he also disliked women who were snobbish and showed off with much jewellery on their dresses, hands, and ears, and was especially angry when Jewish women were sitting with much jewellery on them in the coffee-houses on open terraces, at a time when antisemitism was growing, and he used to say: "The Jews will see one day what will happen to them." How right he was! The Nazis finally came.

We come now to Hedy's grandparents on her mother's side. Their names were Bernhard and Fanny Feingold, nee Korsower. I knew them too. The grandfather was in the jewellery business, specializing in pearls. He was a very religious man, very strict and adored by the family. They had 6 children. The oldest son was Otto Feingold, who lived in Paris, where he had married a French woman, Louise Zimmermann, who was not Jewish, but had converted to Judaism. She adored her husband's parents and did everything to please them, kept the Jewish holidays strictly, and brought their two children up in the Jewish faith. Otto was also in the jewellery business and was very successful. They had a home in the country near Paris in Neuilly Pleasance. The son, Raymond, was married to Lucy Werdenschlag.

I met them in Paris in 1938, when I was there on my way to Cuba. They were lovely people. Raymond survived the war, was in the army, was taken prisoner by the Germans, while in Paris. There Suzanne, his sister, literally saved his life by changing the name on his identification card from Feingold to Fingol, so that the Germans could not find out that he was Jewish. He was then taken to a prisoner camp in Germany, but managed to escape and to make his way back to France into the unoccupied zone. Unfortunately, he lost his life a few years later in an automobile accident. Suzanne married as a young girl a Mr. Roger Levier, very much against the wish of her parents. She had a child, Nicole, which was born mentally retarded. The marriage did not last long.

During the Second World War Suzanne worked in the French underground, where she met Mr. Henri Archambould de Monfort, a count, and his wife. The wife was captured by the Germans and killed. Suzanne and M. de Monfort got married after the war. He was very rich, was at one time secretary of the Institute France, also wrote a few books about Polish history. They had a wonderful house in Paris with many very valuable art objects. They owned a French newspaper, which gave them a big income, and also owned a house on the French Riviera in Agay between St. Tropez and Nice. We were once for one week their guests there. Henri died about 10 years ago, and Suzanne half a year ago, and Nicole, her daughter, is in Paris, also Lucy, the widow of Raymond.

We come now to the second branch of the Feingold family, Betty, who was married to Dr. Isidore Reisberg, a physician, who had his office in the second district in Vienna, and later

moved to the outskirts to Ober St. Veit. They had 3 children, a daughter Johanna, who studied medicine in Vienna, became a doctor and specialized in gynecology and obstetrics. She married an American physician, Dr. Abraham Hilkowich, who was also a gynecologist and obstetrician, and moved to New York, where they had their office in Manhattan at 315 Central Park West. They had 2 children, Ita and David. Dr. Hilkowich died during the war. Johanna got then a position as a physician in the House of Detention for Women in New York, which she kept for over 20 years. Her daughter Ita married a Mr. Mallon, with whom she had one child, Vicki. But the marriage ended in divorce. Ita became then a teacher and still teaches biology in high school. She later re-married a Mr. Kurt Charles Louda, and they live in the same house at 315 Central Park West in a beautiful apartment, overlooking the Central Park. They later had a child, Robert Louda, who is now a handsome young fellow of 17. They also had a house constructed way up in the country, in Granville near Lake St. George, to which they go on weekends, summer and winter. Vicki, their daughter, teaches in grammar school, and got married on January 15, 1977, to a young man, Mr. Gary Gleicher. Johanna Hilkowich died at the age of 80, about 2 years ago. The second child of Johanna Hilkowich, David, who had changed his name to Hill, is married to Sydelle, nee Pollack. They live in New Jersey and have three children, Jonathan Andrew, Douglas Allen, and Linda Ann. David was a stock market analyst, and is now doing statistical work with a large construction firm, and Sydelle is working with an importing company.

The Dr. Reisbergs had, as I said, besides Johanna two more

children, a son Marcell Reisberg, who was married to Margitta, and they lived in California. He died there, many years ago, had a lung cancer. And the third child of the Dr. Reisbergs, is Gertrude, who lives in upper Manhattan near us. She was never married, and supported herself well, working in different positions, at the end for many years at the Western Union.

The family story of Dr. Isidore Reisberg and his wife Betty is not known to me well enough. I hope that Ita and Kurt Louda and David Hill will find it worthwhile to continue here and add more details about these ancestors as well as about themselves, and perhaps Kurt Louda and Sydelle may want to add their own biographies too.

Now to the third branch of the Feingold family, Josef. He was a lawyer and had his office in Vienna in the Beatrixgasse in the 3rd district. He was married to Elsa, nee Schaefer, and they had a beautiful house in Baumgarten on the outskirts of Vienna. They had two children, John and Erich, who later changed their names to Forster. After the Hitler invasion of Austria they emigrated to France. But the parents and Erich were taken by the Germans to Poland, where the parents perished, while Erich survived and later came to the United States. John married Stella, nee ^{Wagner} in Vienna, and they later also came to the United States. Their story is very complicated and fascinating, and I will never be able to tell it correctly. I hope that John and Erich will continue here, perhaps change and re-write in detail what I have written so far about them. It should be a fascinating story that Erich especially has to tell about his escape from captivity, also how he came to the United States. John and Stella have three

children, Lynn, Jimmy, and Lisbeth, all three married and they have little children, and Eric and his wife Erna have 6 children, and live in Scotch Plains in New Jersey, a lovely, happy family, and John and Stella live in Harrison, New York, and have good reasons to be content and happy with their family.

The fourth branch of the Feingold family was Susi, who was also married to a physician, Dr. Osias Pariser, who had his office in Hohenau, north of Vienna, near the border of Moravia. He had died of a brain tumor, and Susi moved then to her parents in Vienna with her two children Annie and Kurt. Annie was the girl who introduced me to Hedy. Annie was an excellent dancer, and it was in a dancing school that I met Hedy the first time. She later went with her uncle Josef and aunt Elsa on a vacation trip to the Baltic Sea, where she met her later husband, Max Lux, who had a big store in Berlin. After they got married, they settled in Berlin and had one child, Ellen. They had there a wonderful life together, till the Hitlerism started. They had to give up everything and moved to Amsterdam. Later, when the Nazis invaded Austria, Susi joined them in Amsterdam. The rest of the story is very sad: They were all taken to the concentration camp Bergen-Belsen in Germany, where Susi and Max died. Annie and Ellen survived, and went back after the war to Amsterdam, where they still live. Annie's brother Kurt was also a Hitler victim. But his daughter Gerty survived miraculously, later got married, and we once got a letter from her from Kenya in Africa. We never heard from her again. Hedy and I visited Annie and her daughter Ellen in Amsterdam in 1960, and spent a few pleasant days together.

The fifth branch of the Feingold family is Gina, Hedy's mother, and I have written about her already and will write a lot more. The sixth branch was Heinrich. He had lived for many years in Panama and also in Paris, and was in the pearl business. He returned to Vienna, and married Hella, nee Aberbach, and they lived in the apartment of his sister Susi for many years. They had no children. When the Nazis came, they managed to escape illegally over the Belgian border and lived in Brussels during the war, suffering much hardship, but survived. Heini, as he was called, died in the year 1958, and Hella still lives in Brussels. We visited her once there in 1960.

I noticed that I had not said anything about Mrs. Fannie Feingold, the wife of Hedy's grandfather Bernhard Feingold, had only mentioned⁶ her name and her maiden name Blum. I saw her a few times. She was completely blind for many years, as the result of a stroke, and they had a nurse in the house to help her for many years. Both Bernhard and Fannie Feingold died in 1922, 14 days apart. They had raised a noble, fine family.

I should also add that Betty Reisberg, the oldest daughter of the Feingold family had left Vienna and came to the U.S. with her daughter Gertrude at the end of November 1938. Betty died on January 30th, 1945, 77 years old. Her oldest daughter, Dr. Johanna Hilkowich died on December 11th, 1973, shortly before reaching the age of 81 years. Her brother Marcel had died in 1948.

I should furthermore add that Suzanne, the daughter of Otto Feingold, had died in 1977, 73 years old, had suffered from diabetes.

CHAPTER 12

HOSPITAL WORK AS A DOCTOR.

Even before my graduation, I started, as a special privilege by professor Schnitzler, to work in the nearby hospital, the Wiedener Krankenhaus, in the department of surgery. He was the brother of the famous playwright Arthur Schnitzler. After my graduation, I started to work in the department of pathology under professor Carl Sternberg, after whom the Sternberg cells in Hodgkins disease are named, and worked there mostly in the afternoon till late in the evening, often till late at night. In the surgical department all the doctors had to accompany the chief, when he arrived in the morning and

made the "rounds", stopping at every bed, and examining thoroughly new cases. He was an excellent diagnostician. After the rounds he went to the operating room, where a patient was already lying on the table. Before he started to scrub (wash the hands), he chose one of the doctors to do the anesthesia. In those days there were no special anesthetists; that came much later. Very soon he chose me as anesthetist, and it did not take long that I became his favourite anesthetist. In those days we used only ether, sometimes very cautiously also chloroform, a few drops only. I liked to do the anesthesia, because that gave me the best spot to observe the operation. The bad part of it was that I breathed in a lot of ether, which made me a little drowsy, usually in the afternoon. Often I had to assist in the operation, which usually meant holding the opening in the abdomen apart with special instruments. Every doctor was trained to do operations himself, under the guidance of the first assistant, beginning with smaller operations like cystocele, and gradually advancing to more difficult operations like hernia, hemorrhoids, and appendix operations. Twice a week I had to work in the emergency room, which was also quite interesting. Often we had to do tooth extractions there. Every doctor was on a list for night service for anesthetics and other emergencies, which meant staying in the hospital for 24 hours. I had my own room and could sleep, but had to get up, whenever I was called. I stayed in the surgical department for one year. I did not receive any salary, was well supported by my brother Carl and received regularly checks from him. He also supported Else, who had moved in 1924 to Paris.

My favourite field was pathology, and whenever I could get away, I went to the pathology department to watch professor Carl Sternberg perform autopsies. This fascinated me. Very often there were other professors there, whose cases were being autopsied. I had my little jars with formaline always ready, anxious to get a little piece of an organ, if it was an especially rare or interesting case. I worked then every afternoon for many hours. I had learned the technique of preparing specimens for microscopic examinations. This was complicated, an elaborate process, putting the specimen first in 70% alcohol, then for a certain time in 96% alcohol, and then in absolute (100%) alcohol, then in paraffin in an incubator, and finally in more concentrated paraffin. There came many more steps, cutting and staining the specimens, which I will not further describe here, till the specimen was ready to be seen under the microscope. I gradually developed a mastery in that kind of work. Once a week we had to go with our preparations into professor Sternberg's office, and he examined each of the slides, commenting on them and making his diagnosis. It was fascinating work. Sometimes he was elated about an especially beautiful slide. Lunch I had in the hospital, but for the evening I made the long trip to Hedy's home, usually in time for a good dinner. I stayed till very late there, and it was quite late when I arrived at home in my room in the Belvederegasse.

In that year 1925 we often went on trips, on some with colleagues of Hedy's from the chemistry department, Maryla Schwanefeld and another lovely girl, Mirka Feninger, and also Erich. On one of the excursions we went to the Gesäuse, and a picture shows us sitting on top of a very high mountain, the Hochzinödl,



On the Hochzinoedl (6450 ft.) L. to r. Maryla, Mirka, Hedy, Adolph.



June 14, 1925. Taking cover in a small cave in a rainstorm. L. to r. Adolpn, Maryla Schwanenfeld-Frisch, Mirka Feninger, and Hedy.

6450 feet high, in another picture standing on a bridge over a very high waterfall. I had to walk or climb down a few hundred feet to take that shot. Maryla got married later and her name is now Frisch. We remained very good friends. In that same year Hedy and I went on a 3-weeks vacation to Millstatt on the Millstätter Lake in Carinthia, where friends of ours, Mr. and Mrs. Welzl, spent their vacation too. It was a lovely place. Mr. Welzl went with us on a bigger trip, by train to Mallnitz and from there climbing up to the Tauernpass (7350 feet) and then down to Boeckstein and Badgastein. The way back to Millstatt we took by railroad through the very long Tauern tunnel. It was a very pleasant vacation.

In fall of that year, Hedy's family had a very rare visitor from Paris, Otto Feingold, the oldest brother of my mother-in-law. (see the picture, facing page 197)
I have a picture of a family gathering, showing the three brothers Otto, Josef, and Heini Feingold, and two sisters, Betty Reisberg and Hedy's mother Gina Ziegler, Dr. Reisberg, Hedy, Lisa, Erich, and me, Elsa Feingold, Josef Feingold's wife, and their two sons, John and Erich Forster, still little boys. Only the third sister, Susi, was not present. It was a nice re-union.

At Christmas and till New Year, I had a very difficult job. Professor Carl Sternberg had an assistant, Dr. Homma, and a very efficient female laboratory worker. Both of them went on vacation at the same time and professor Sternberg was angry and helpless. He approached me and asked me, whether I would help him out, and I had to say "yes". It meant doing all the bacteriologic work, for which I was not prepared at all, blood cultures, Vidal reactions for typhoid fever, examination of pus and culture, urine cultures, etc. I had good books and

could look many things up, but still, it was an extremely difficult job, and I tried very hard to do my best. Professor Sternberg was very satisfied, but I was happy, when the New Year was over, and the two vacationers were back on their jobs. I learnt a lot, doing that kind of work. This was the laboratory, which did all the bacteriologic laboratory examinations for the whole hospital, which had about 400 beds. I did not do any histologic work from autopsies. That had to wait till the two vacationers had come back.

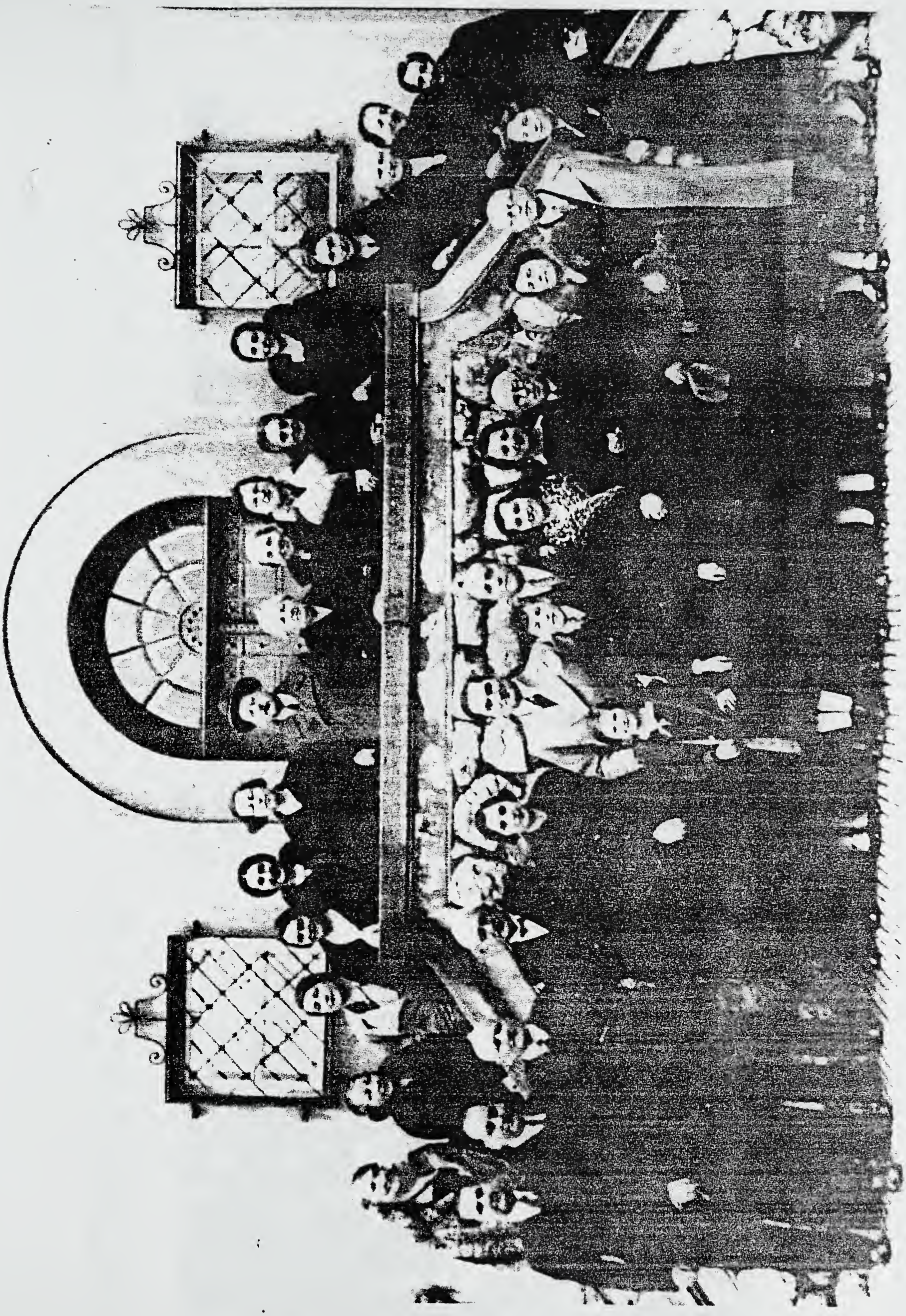
Later on, in 1926, professor Sternberg autopsied a very interesting case, a dwarf, about 22 years old, and he was quite excited about this case, since he had published once a paper about such a case, which he called hypoplastic dwarfism, and he asked me to write a paper about this new case. I got all the necessary data, the measurements and parts of all the organs, including the endocrine glands, which had to be measured and weighed, also X-ray pictures of the bones. I had to visit the family of that young man and get all the informations about his mental capacities, his school work, etc. I had a lot of work with that. I had to go to the library almost daily and study publications about dwarfism. The best known type of dwarfism was the Paltauf dwarf, and the best and most extensive description was a publication by professor Erdheim about the chondrodystrophic dwarf. It was an enormous field and I did not advance as fast as I would have liked. I hardly scratched the surface of that case, when professor Sternberg had another interesting case and asked me to write a paper about that case too. It was a case of eunuchoidism, and again I got the endocrine glands and parts of other or-

gans. It was really too much for me, since I did not want to become a pathologist, but rather a general practitioner. Nevertheless, I published the case of hypoplastic dwarfism in the Pathologic Society with demonstration of slides on the screen, mentioning that it was Carl Sternberg, who first described such a case, and that there was only one more such case in the literature, described in Japan. But I could not continue working on that case, so that it could be published nor could I continue working on the case of eunuchoidism. One day, about two years later, I asked professor Sternberg to publish these cases himself. He understood that I had not enough time to do it, since I intended to go into private practice. He then published these two cases and mentioned that I had started the work.

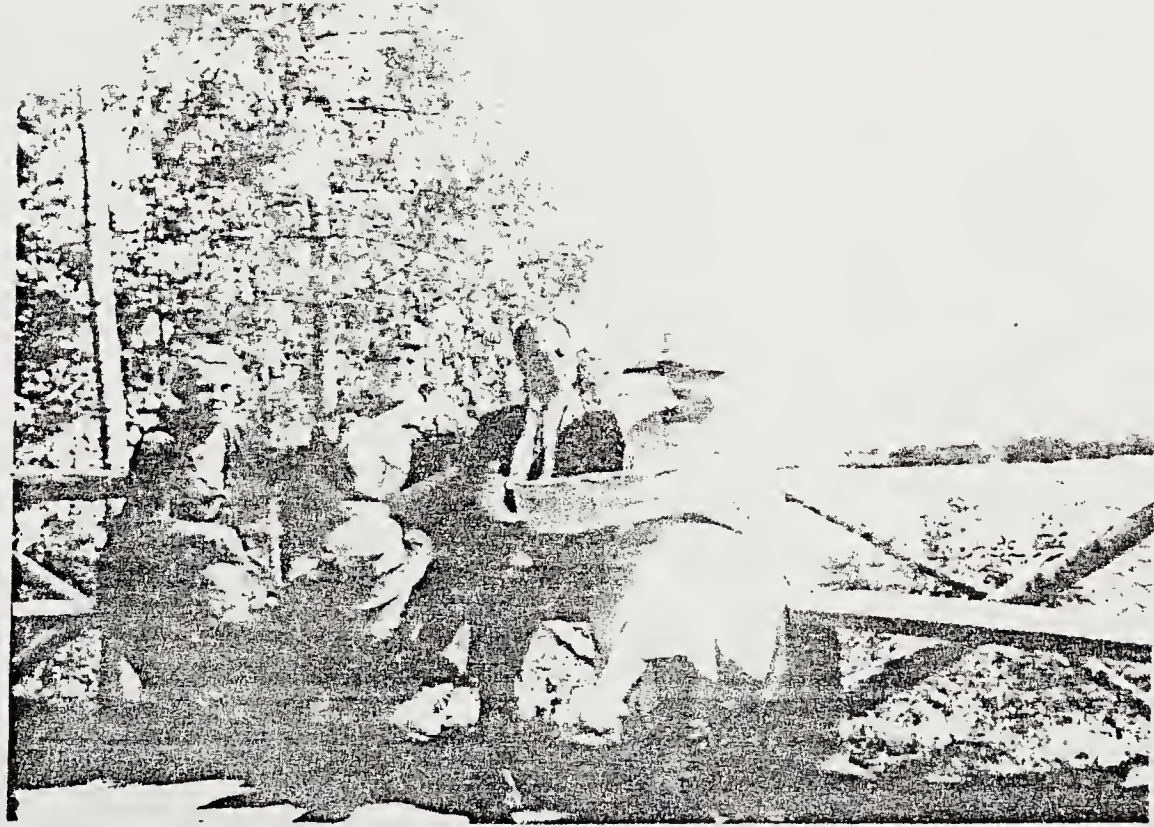
My photoalbum shows that in 1926, Hedy and I went on a skitour with Olly Goldschmied, a cousin of Hedy's, and her two daughters, Anny and Edith and a young governess, which they had for a long time. In that year, Hedy had her first job as a chemist in the sugar factory in Trnava, in Tchechoslovakia, where her cousin, Ernst Goldschmied, was Generaldirektor. It was a temporary job, lasting as long as the sugar campagne lasted, that means a few months. During that time, I visited her a few times on weekends, stayed there 2 or 3 days, and these people were very nice towards me. The next following year she had the same job again.

My summer vacation I spent in that year 1926 again in Czernowitz. I have to correct what I had said before, that the last time I saw Czernowitz was in 1924. That was not correct. It was in 1926. Carl had then a car and we made a

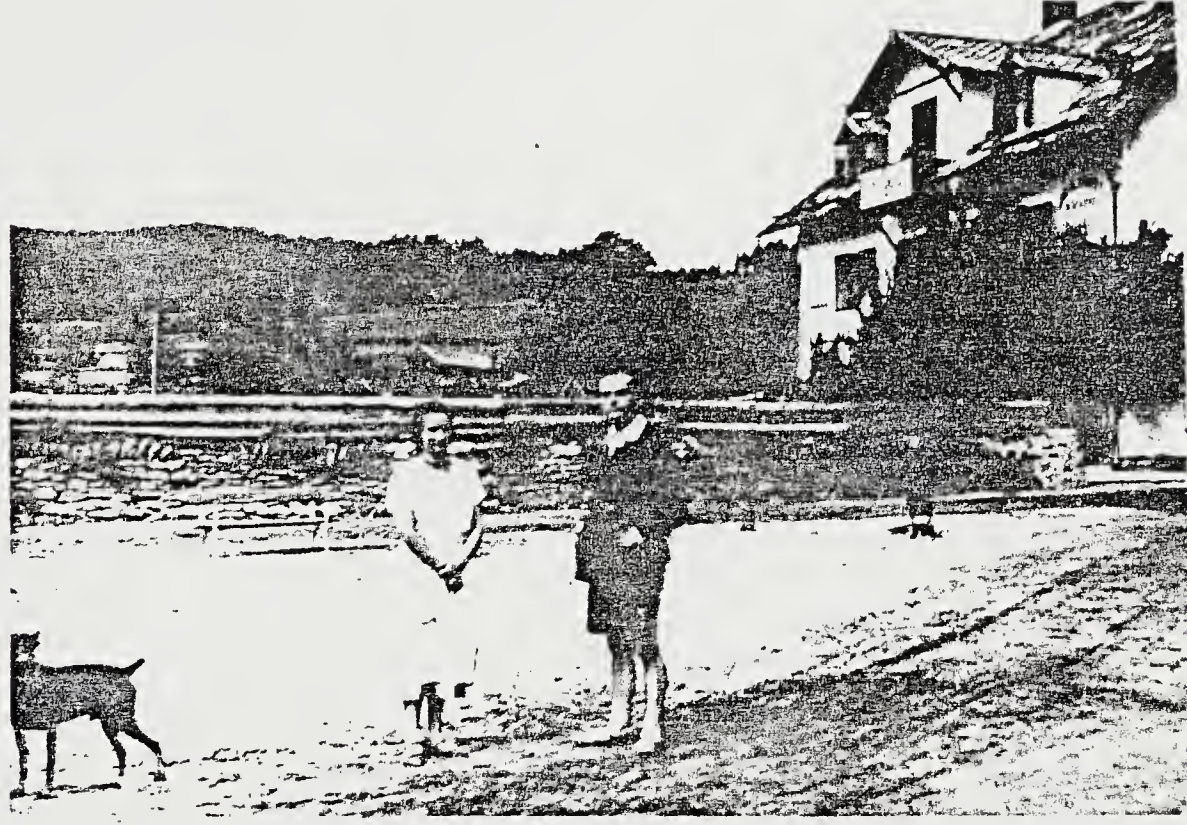
Family-gathering in Tyrnau in Slovakia for the celebration of the 80th birthday of Sali Goldschmied, who is in the center of the staircase. That was in 1926 or 1927. To the left of aunt Sali is her son Ernst Goldschmied* and going further to the left Anni Goldschmied*, Emmi Meisel*, Else Ziegler*, Trude Ziegler*, Cilli Hannak*, and next to her a lady, whose name we don't know anymore. Then, standing: Walter Ziegler, Dr. Helmuth Husserl, Dr. Benjamin Ziegler*, Marcus Ziegler, Lisa Ziegler-Rosegg, Walter Meisel* and René Meisel, Peter Ziegler, Jaques Ziegler*, Dorli Ziegler*, then an unknown young lady, then Simon Hannak*, Hilda Ziegler*, Julius Ziegler, Antoinette Ziegler, and up on the staircase. Terry Tugendhat*, Hella Leinkauf, Klemi Husserl*, Clementine Dietrich, Else Brecher, Rosa Ziegler*, Edith Steiner, and finally Olly Goldschmied*.- 16 of those named became later Nazi victims, marked here by an asterisk (*) next to their names.



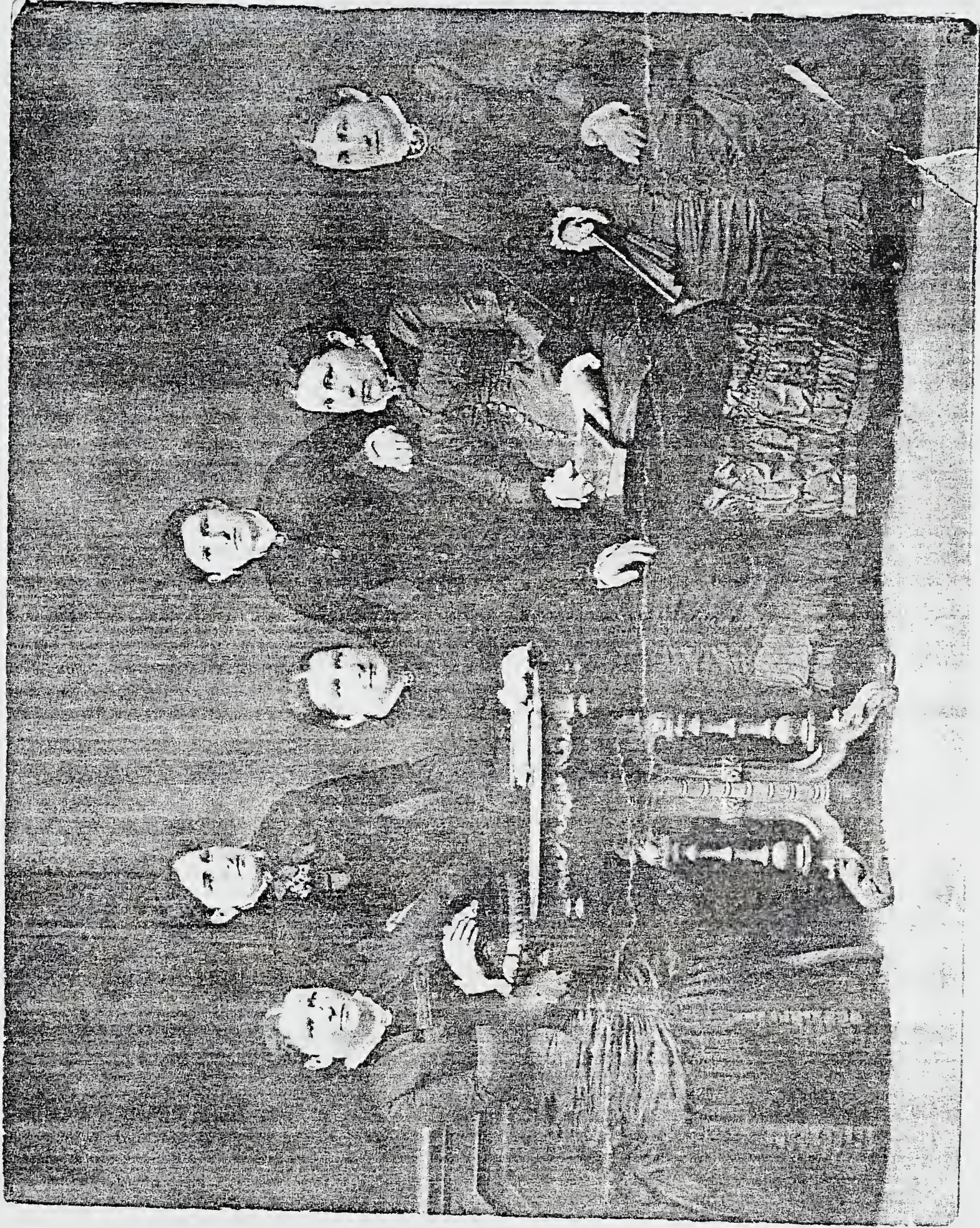
In Czernowitz on a walk in a park
with my mother, Lotte and her mother.



With Erich on a trip in Styria.



With Hedy in Millstatt in Carinthia.



The 6 female members of the Ziegler-family, from left to right:
Minna (Himmelreich), Sali (Goldschmied), Pepi (Willheim),
Klemi (Husserl), Regi (Neumann), Nettie (Husserl).

few nice tours into Romania. The farthest we got was Jasy. We also went on hunting trips with a big group of people and one picture in my album shows all of us with the rifles and about 5 or 6 hares lying in front of us. These tours usually ended with a fine meal, served at the home of the land-owner. I don't remember any details about the rest of the year. I continued working at the department of surgery till the end of 1925 and pathology till the end of July 1926.

Erich had already started to study medicine and as far as I remember, he graduated in the year 1930. When he came to pathology, I gave him many cassettes with all my slides, which helped him a lot. But, unfortunately, he did not give them back to me, but gave them to some of his colleagues, with the understanding that they would give them back to him. But he never got them back, and that is how I lost all my beautiful slides, my whole collection. I could not be angry at him, since he was such a nice fellow, whom I really loved, but I was quite unhappy about it - for a while.

Here is a complete list of my hospital work in the different departments: Surgery under professor Julius Schnitzler from January 20th, 1925 till December 27th, 1925, and then again from November 1st, 1928 till December 31st, 1928. Pathology under professor Carl Sternberg from April 2nd, 1925 till March 12th, 1926. I continued working there unofficially till the end of June 1929. That means that I went there almost daily to autopsies and did then histologic work in the afternoon. Internal medicine under professor Richard Bauer from March 20th, 1926 till April 15th, 1927 and then again under professor Maximilian Sternberg from June 16th, 1927 till Oc-

tober 31st, 1927, and then again from January 1st, 1929 till June 9th, 1929. Gynecology and obstetrics under professor Josef Halban from April 15th, 1927 till June 15th, 1927, and then again from March 1st, 1928 till June 30th, 1928. Dermatology under professor Paul Rusch from November 27th, 1927 till February 29th, 1928.

All together I had 5 years of hospital work. There were some interruptions, when I went on vacation. These were usually winter vacations, and for one vacation I went with Hedy to the Adriatic Sea to Cirivenica for about three weeks, a beautiful sea resort in Yugoslavia. Except for the mosquitos it was a most pleasurable vacation. We did not share the same room, lived even in two different houses. Since I spoke fluently Yugoslavian, I had no difficulties to communicate with the people there. The beach there was simply wonderful. We made also boat trips along the coast and to a big island Krk, which once, when it belonged to Autria, had the Italian name Veglia. We visited there one of the numerous grottos. We went also once to Sušak and tried to get a permission to go over the Italian border to Fiume, but were not successful. We would have liked to buy some Italian stuff there. After the 2nd World War Fiume was given to Yuguslavia.

Med. Dr. B. Ziegler

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Mrs. J. J. Ziegler
T. Perry,

4 prescriptions, found among my papers, written by Dr. Ziegler, in 1926, showing his handwriting. to adorn my biography.

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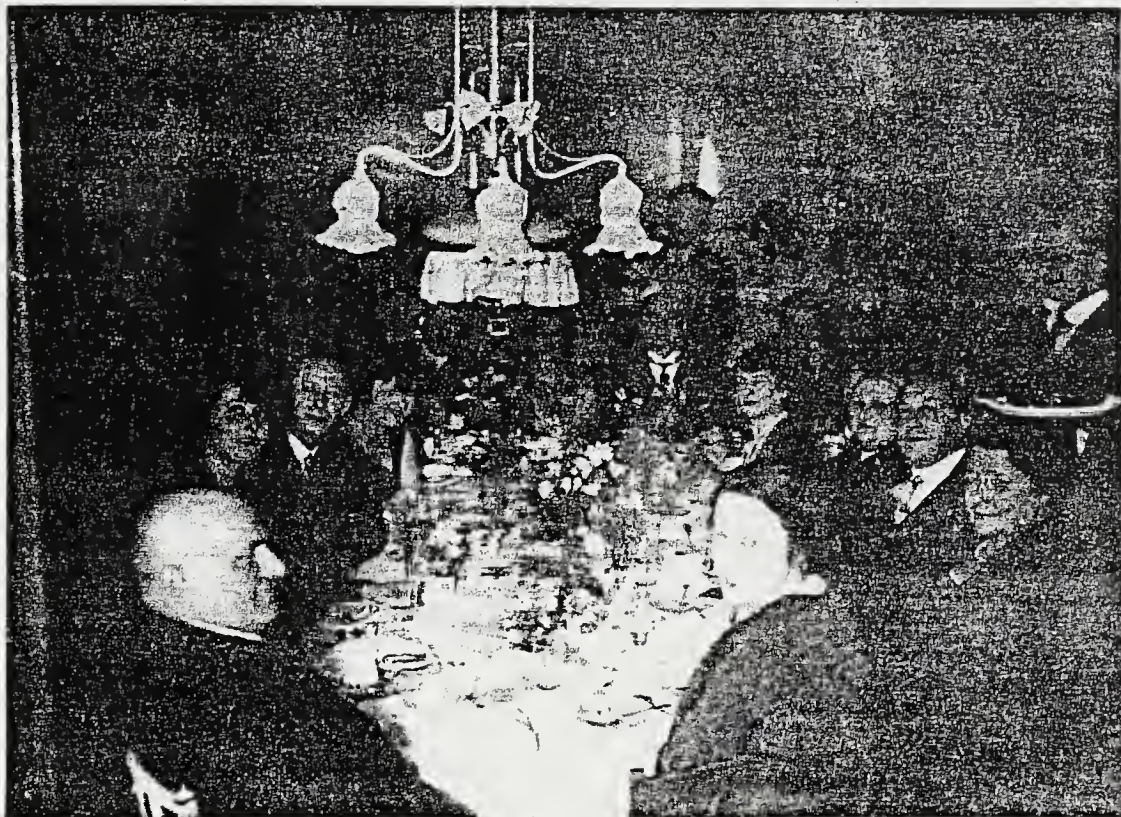
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CHAPTER 13

OUR WEDDING.

One more important interruption of my hospital work was our wedding on March 4th, 1928. We had planned it long before and had hoped to take over a practice from a doctor, who had a position as rayons-physician of the Arbeiter-Krankenkasse, which means workmen's Health Insurance or something like that, the same position, which my father-in-law had had for 36 years. Such an opportunity arrived, when Dr. Krips had died. We spoke



Our weddingparty. L.to r.: Dr.Benjamin Ziegler, Trude Ziegler, Heinrich Feingold, Lotte Mechner, Martin Sobel, Hedy, Adolph, Elsa Feingold, Bertha (my mother), Klemi Husserl, Jaques Ziegler, Cilli Hannak, Gina Ziegler. Standing on the right side: Walter Ziegler and Erich Ziegler. Sitting next to Dr.Benjamin Ziegler, barely visible, Carl Mechner.

to his widow and she promised that she would help me to get her husband's position. She offered us the entire lower floor, where he had his office in the 19th district at Ferdinand von Saar Platz, for rent. She also promised us to get us some of his patients in the meantime. The office was poorly equipped with very old furniture. She asked quite a high rent, 200 Austrian Schillings, and without much hesitation we accepted the offer. We thought it was an excellent opportunity. It was in reality a very wrong step, but in many respects good. We had a home and could get married. Carl supported me and we could do it.

The wedding took place in the temple in the Seitenstettengasse in the 1st district, officiated by Rabbi Dr. Taglicht. The wedding feast took place in the home of Hedy's parents, where many members of her family were gathered for a fine celebration and meal. Great many of Hedy's relatives were there, many from far away places in Tchechoslovakia, but most of them from Vienna. From my family some who lived in Vienna were there, but many came from far away, from Czernowitz like my mother, Carl with his wife Lotte and his mother-in-law Clara Ohrlaender (whose husband had died shortly before on July 1st, 1927 at the age of 59). Everything was well planned and prepared. It was amazing, how my mother-in-law, with the help of Lisa, had stored away beds and other furniture, so that 4 big rooms could be used for the enormous number of guests.

It was a beautiful affair, fine and plentiful food and drinks, many toasts. Carl sang a few songs, and everybody was happy. The guests stayed till late at night, but Hedy and I left earlier, and went to our new apartment on Ferdinand

von Saarplatz for a short night rest, and got up very early to get to the train station for our well prepared honeymoon trip to Venice. We stayed in the hotel Marconi near the Ponte Rialto on the Canal Grande. We visited almost all the art galleries, many palaces, churches, also the islands of San Giorgio Maggiore, Murano, and Burano, including the glass factories, and returned home after 10 or 12 days. It was a wonderful trip. I continued working at the hospital, at the department of gynecology and obstetrics.

Once Carl arrived from Czernowitz. We were just two months married, and he asked me to accompany him on an airplane flight to Salzburg and from there to Berchtesgaden in Bavaria by car. Airplanes were at that time not much used and flights regarded as dangerous. But I agreed, although Hedy was not very happy about it. Only the two of us were in the airplane. It was an open plane, no floor, only metal rods instead, on which our two valises rested. When we looked down between the metal rods, it gave us the jitters. But everything went well and we landed in Salzburg. There we rented a car, which took us to Berchtesgaden, where Carl had to sign a contract with a Mrs. Sedlitzky, who had the patent for a mineral salt formula, Darkauer Jod Salt, which was used for baths. Carl had then the right to produce it for all of Romania. We made a short visit to the Koenigsee, but it was already late in the day and we could not see much, only the steep mountains on both sides of the lake. Back to Salzburg and then by train to Vienna and Carl to Czernowitz. Hedy was happy to see me alive.

In June of 1928, my mother-in-law had the misfortune to get a severe gallbladder attack. She had bad gallbladder at-

tacks before already, but this one was very serious with jaundice and high fever. Professor Schnitzler was called and he had her immediately transferred to the Sanatorium Loew, the biggest and best in Vienna for an operation, which he performed the same day. It was a phlegmone of the gallbladder, which was enormously enlarged and contained a great number of stones, some of them larger than cherries. She recuperated nicely. Antibiotics were not known then and she had in the beginning for a few days fever, had a drain and a long gauze tampon in the wound, which professor Schnitzler, who came twice a day to visit her, removed gradually. Altogether, she was 18 days in bed. I visited her daily and became acquainted with the sanatorium doctors. One of them, a Dr. Fisch, suggested that I could get a position as a sanatorium doctor, or as they called it house doctor, and could make a nice amount of money. The sanatorium hired every year for the summer months a doctor to substitute for the 5 or 6 regular house doctors during their vacations. Dr. Fisch intervened on my behalf and I was accepted and could start almost immediately on July 1st. I was very happy and so was Hedy. Very soon I started to bring nice amounts of money home, which the different surgeons, whom I had assisted at the operations, had put on the patients bills for me, also when I did the anesthetics. Most of the patients were very rich people, many were aristocrats and a fee of 150 or 200 Schillings for me was not hurting them. Often patients handed to me an envelope with money, when they left. I remember that on one day I brought exactly 1000 Schillings home. My work there terminated after 4 months on October 31st, 1928, and I had accumulated a nice amount of money. The work was

not difficult, but I had to stay there every 3 or 4 days at night and that was the bad part of it, since I hardly got a chance to sleep.

But, on the other hand, it was very interesting work, since I became acquainted with almost all the professors of the University, among them many famous people, seeing them operate, doing anesthetics or assisting them at operations, and discussing their cases with them. There were fields of medicine, in which I had not had a chance before to work, like urology, orthopedic surgery, neurology, ophthalmology. There were also innumerable tonsilectomies, nose operations, larynx operations, and mastoid operations, which I had also not seen before.

I had to take care of about 10 patients in 10 rooms in an older part of the building, which was called "the burg", which meant in case of operations the complete aftercare. Some surgeons visited their patients once a day for a few minutes, gave their orders and left. But some surgeons were very negligent and came only every 3 or 4 days. In these cases it was really I, who had to take care of the patients, prescribing medications, changing bandages, etc. When I had night service, I had to take care of all the patients in the sanatorium, which was an enormous job, with much responsibility. There were often complications and emergencies, where I had to intervene, and the responsibility was great, when I could not reach the doctor, to whom the patient belonged, by phone. All that, practicing in the way I described, was very valuable for my medical education and a good preparation for my future practice. When the 4 months were over, I returned to my hospital to resume my

work as "Secundararzt".

Regarding the hospital work in the departments of internal medicine I should also mention that the doctors had to do almost all the laboratory work themselves, each doctor for the patients, who were under his care. That meant examinations of urine, blood, sputum, and stool, since there was not a laboratory, as we have it now, that did all these examinations for the whole hospital. Only very difficult examinations were done in the pathological department, like blood or urine cultures for bacteriae or Wassermann tests for syphilis, Vidal reactions for typhoid fever, examinations of pus, etc. But other examinations were done by us doctors, examinations of blood for urea and blood sugar, also for amount of hemoglobin, blood cell counts including differential counts, stool examinations for parasites, sputum examinations for tubercle bacilli, etc. The department of internal medicine had to do these examinations also for the other departments, for the departments of surgery, gynecology and obstetrics, dermatology, etc., whenever they asked for it. That kind of work kept us doctors quite busy. We learned how to do it and that was very valuable later, when we went into private practice.

I want to add here also that I had done quite a few autopsies, while working under professor Carl Sternberg in the department of pathology. I had the misfortune of infecting my left thumb with tuberculosis, when performing an autopsy on a girl with tuberculosis. It was only a slight scratch, and when I was looking for it after the autopsy, to take care of it, I could not find the spot anymore. But about 14 days later the infection showed up, and although it was at first

cauterized and then operated on, it showed up again, and when the infection started to look bad, an assistant of professor Schnitzler did finally a more radical job by removing a piece of skin with surrounding normal tissue, and suturing the defect, and that was the end of it. Such infections of the hands were not rare among pathologists.

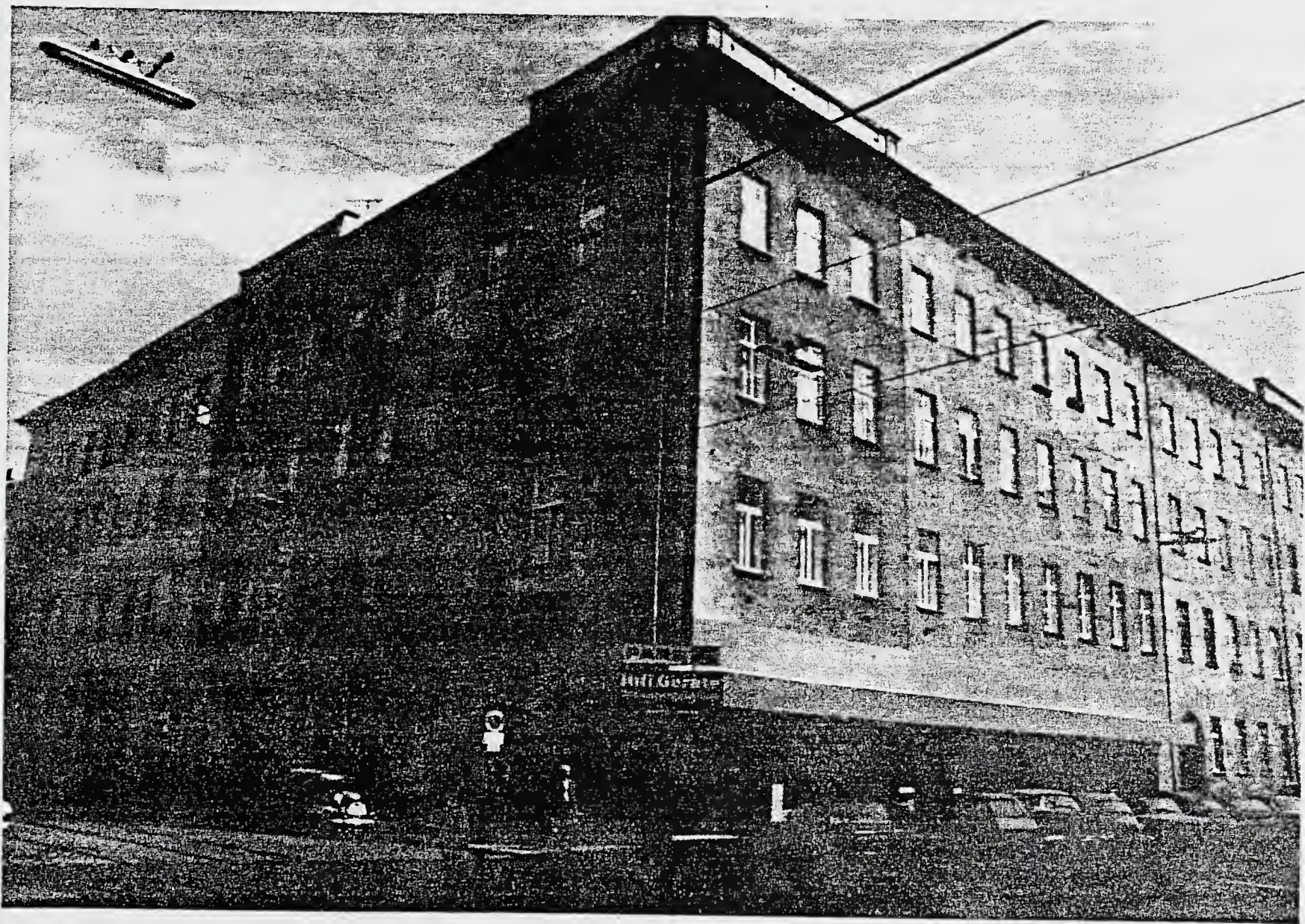
The apartment, which we had rented on Ferdinand von Saarp-
platz, was, as we later found out, the wrong place for us. We should have inquired about it before we had rented it. We would have found out that Dr. Krips was involved in a great scandal and was dismissed from the Arbeiter-Krankenkasse. He was caught by the husband of a patient, hidden behind a curtain, while making amorous propositions to her. He was beaten up by him and then denounced to the Krankenkasse and the police. He was the father of the famous conductor Josef Krips, well known at that time especially in Germany, later all over the world. The story about the scandal was in all the newspapers, but we had not known about it. Shortly afterwards, Dr. Krips committed suicide by shooting himself, and shortly afterwards we had moved into that apartment. The position of a physician for that rayon was offered in a medical journal, and I had sent in my application too, but the position was given to another doctor.

Besides that, the apartment was very bad in many respects. There was no running water in the office and only one water outlet for the whole apartment in the hallway. There was no real bathroom to take a shower, only a toilet. For heating in winter there was one big metal stove, to be heated with coal, in one room. It was a disaster, and we knew that we would not

stay there long. We were badly misled by Mrs. Krips.

We started to look for an apartment in the 2nd district, and it took a long time till we found the right place in the spring of 1929. Hedy and I were once walking through the Taborstrasse, not far from where the parents lived, and at the corner of Darwingasse, I looked up at the windows on the second floor, one floor above the ground floor, and told Hedy that that would be the right place for us. I went to the house-steward for information and found out the name of the tenant of that apartment, ^{was} Mr. Hochstimm, and also that he was in a very poor financial situation. I found his name in the telephone directory, called him up, and asked him, whether he would consider moving out of the apartment. I told him that I was interested in renting it, and that I would help him with money to rent another apartment. He said, that he was willing to consider it. Hedy and I went there on one of the next days to take a look at the apartment. It consisted of 3 large rooms and one smaller room, a so-called cabinet, since it had only one window, an entrance hall, kitchen, a room for a maid, and a toilet. We found the apartment excellent for our purpose, after certain extensive construction work. After we got the consent of the owner of the building, we signed a contract with Mr. Hochstimm. We agreed that we would get the apartment on May 15th, 1929, against payment by us of the amount of 3.500 Schillings, which was a nice amount of money in those days.

The construction work began immediately. Since the apartment had no running water, it had to be brought in from the hall way. For the laying of pipes, the floor of the entrance hall, the kitchen, and the room for the maid had to be removed.



This picture shows the house where we lived before the 2nd world war. I took it when we were there on a trip in 1960. The house had been damaged during the war by a bomb and was rebuilt. They had made a garage on the main floor. We had lived one floor above. I have marked 4 windows of our former apartment with a black dot, marking our former bedroom and living room. The next window around the corner, facing the Taborstrasse belonged also to our former living room. Then come 2 more windows, where our waiting room was and one more window, where my office room was.

It was planned to partition the room for the maid, so that a bathroom could be built with a bath tub, wash basin, and a heater, heated by gas. We got a modern kitchen with running cold and hot water, and a wash basin with cold and hot water in the adjoining cabinet, which became my doctors office. For heating of the apartment in winter a big ceramic stove was constructed, which was put into the wall in such a way that half of the stove was in the living room and the other half in our bedroom. It was a beautiful stove, and was to be fired with big logs of wood. Then came electrical work, and finally painting.

All that required a lot of money. We had accumulated some, but a neighbor of my inlaws, without having been approached, offered us a loan, which easily covered these expenses and also expenses for furniture and office equipment. We paid it back in regular monthly rates, and had the whole loan repaid in the course of 2 or 3 years. It took a long time, till we had our furniture, made to order, and could finally move into the apartment.

In the meantime, I had worked in the hospital, and one day I received a call from the Sanatorium Loew and was asked, whether I wanted to work there again during the summer. I wanted, and I started on June 10th and worked there till October 6th, altogether about 4 months, and it was again a good opportunity to earn a nice amount of money, which we could use very well. Our biggest worry was that I should get the job as "rayons physician", which my father-in-law has had for 36 years. There were many young doctors in Vienna, who were waiting to get such a job, and we knew that good connections, which we



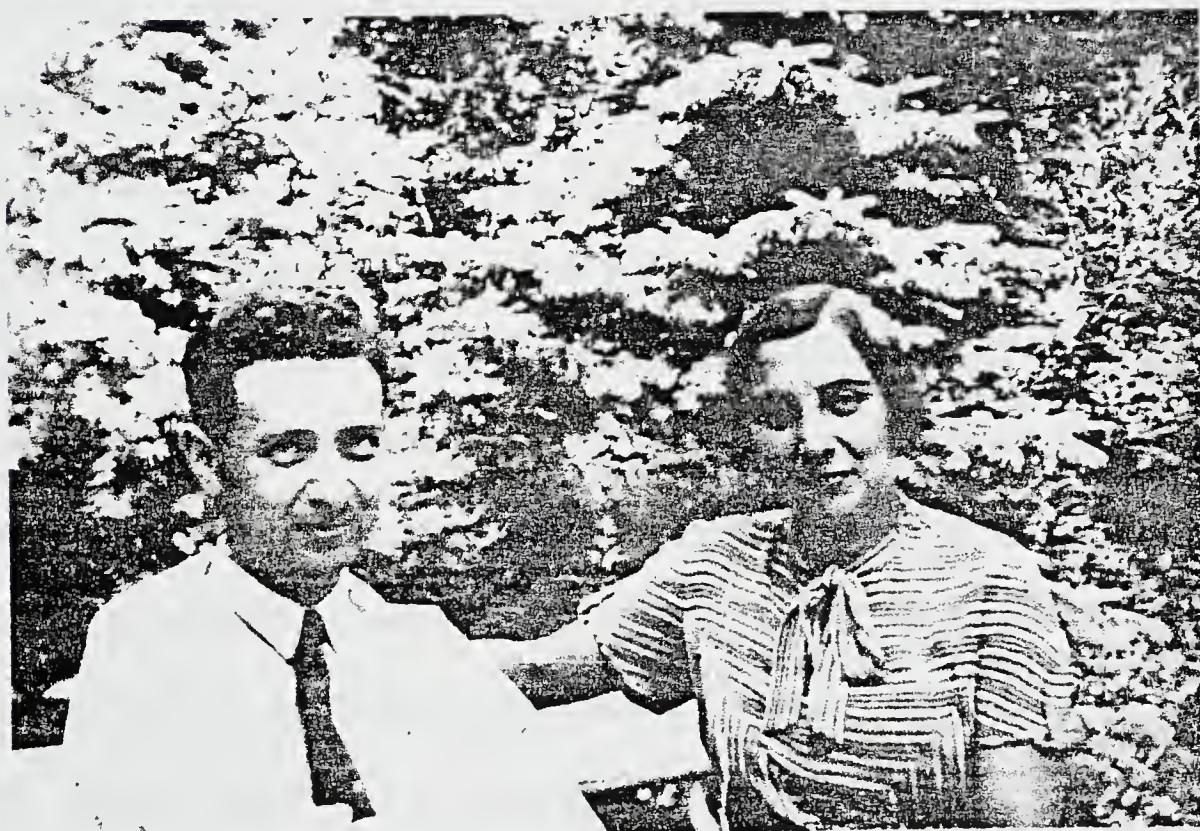
Hedy 1929



Adolph 1925



Lisa 1929



Erich and Lisa , July 5, 1935

called "protection", was necessary to get it, and that we did not have. At that time the head of the Austrian government, the chancellor, was a churchman, Monsignore Ignaz Seipel, who was a strict clericalist and anti-socialist, and for me as a Jew the chances were not good. But I had enormous luck, and I have to tell an interesting story in detail.

It so happened that one of the patients in my department in the "burg" was a man, who was minister or what we call here secretary of the Ministerium for Health and Social Welfare, a Mr. Aladar von Duda. He was operated on by professor Schnitzler - it was an abdominal operation - and everything seemed to go well. He was transferred to my department a few days after the operation. But after a few days a serious complication started, a paralysis of the intestines, which we call ileus. All kinds of medicines, injections of Physostigmin etc. did not help, nor did repeated enemas and high clysmas. By auscultation of the abdomen there was no noise audible. The abdomen was enormously swollen, and the patient had gradually gone into a kind of stupor. He did not eat nor drink anything, of course. That went on for days and professor Schnitzler was desperate, and so was Dr. Schawerda, who was the doctor, who had recommended professor Schnitzler for the operation. On the day the patient was transferred to my department, professor Schnitzler came early in the morning and ordered another Physostigmin injection, and said that if it does not help, he would have to operate in the afternoon again and do a colostomy, which means an operation, opening the abdomen and the colon. This would probably not have helped either.

This was a moment, where I could recommend something. I told professor Schnitzler that I had seen a good result in a case

of paralytic ileus in the Wiedener Krankenhaus in the department of professor Halban, where an intravenous injection of Pituitrin, mixed with glucose, had an immediate effect in restoring the peristaltic activity of the intestines. Professor Schnitzler seemed to be very happy, and asked me to give the injection to the patient and left. While I prepared the injection, Dr. Schawerda told me that he would give the injection to the patient. I agreed, but said that it had to be given very slowly, since it is a very powerful drug. Dr. Schawerda said then: "No, it is better you do it". I succeeded in scaring him away. There was the wife of the patient in the room, also his brother, a retired high officer of the army, and Dr. Schawerda. I asked the nurse to put the patient on a bedpan and they all laughed. He had not had a bowel movement for 8 or 10 days. Anyway, the patient was put on a bedpan, and I started the injection. At first I injected a small amount, about $\frac{1}{2}$ of one c.c. and then waited a while. Soon we heard a gurgling noise in his abdomen, and the brother of the patient said: "What wonderful music!". Then I injected another $\frac{1}{2}$ c.c. and again we heard that gurgling noise. Then a whole c.c. and the patient started to press, and evacuated gas and a small amount of stool. I went ahead now with the injection in shorter intervals, and the patient began to evacuate large amounts of stool. At the end, the bedpan was filled to the rim. There was jubilation in the room and everybody was happy. The patient started to talk normally, his abdomen had collapsed to normal size and he was all smiles. He had not eaten for days, and now he had a small lunch, since he had become hungry. Professor Schnitzler was especially happy, when he came in the

afternoon. The next day, the patient was out of bed, and one or two days later he left for home, completely cured. But before he left, he said to me: "Dr. Mechner, you have saved my life, and I will be grateful to you, as long as I live. I wished I could do something for you". For that I had waited, and I told him: "I think I know, what you could do for me". And I told him about the position of my father-in-law, which I would like to get, and the rest of the story. I don't remember the exact words of his answer, but it was very promising and he said I should call, when my father-in-law will be ready to retire. I was now really happy.

But I had also another iron in the fire. I was also taking care of another patient, a Mr. Kunz, who happened to be in a very high position in the Arbeiterkrankenkasse. He was "Obmann des Ueberwachungsausschusses" (chairman of the superintendence committee). I was often sitting in his room and talking to him about my problem and my worries about my future. Before he left, he told me that he will do all he can for me. I felt that I had hit the jackpot by working in that sanatorium.

CHAPTER 14 3

OPENING MY PRIVATE OFFICE. OUR NEW HOME.

For the last two months, I returned to the surgical department of the Wiedener Krankenhaus, and on January 1st, 1930, I opened my practice at 64 Taborstrasse in the 2nd district. My father-in-law had written shortly before a letter to the Arbeiter-Krankenkasse, announcing his retirement as rayons physician with December 31st, 1929, and indicating that I will substitute for him, till the position will be filled again. I was now all of a sudden a busy practitioner. My office hours for the patients of the Arbeiter-Krankenkasse were from 12 to 1 o'clock. But the patients came in droves and filled my waiting room completely,

so that many had to stand in the middle of the room. It was a nice, big waiting room with fine furniture and a grand piano standing in one corner, and a fine, antique candelabra hanging in the middle of the room. The office hours usually lasted till 3 P.M., often longer, and in between and afterwards there were private patients or patients, who belonged to the railway workers Krankenkasse and other institutions. For the Arbeiter-Krankenkasse I had to take care of patients, who either lived in my rayon, which was outlined by certain streets or worked in that area, and it included office visits as well as house visits. These latter were quite numerous, and since I had no car, they kept me busy in the morning, before my office hours, as well as in the afternoon after my office hours. Payment was on a monthly basis, increasing every year by a certain amount. Only night calls were paid separately.

Of course I had called Mr. Aladar von Duda, as soon as my father-in-law had sent in his letter of resignation, and he told me not to worry. The position was offered in a medical journal and there were, of course, great many competitors. One day, I was called to the office of the director of the Krankenkasse, Dr. Trautmann, and he told me that I was selected for the position of rayons physician as successor of Dr. Ziegler. I was quite happy and thanked him. He told me that I must have been quite busy looking for connections to the Krankenkasse, and he gave me, among other papers, a letter, which Mr. Kunz had written on my behalf. I still have it. Translated into English, it reads as follows: "Dr. Mechner, whom I have met as house doctor in the Sanatorium Loew as an amiable, competent doctor, always ready to help, has applied for the po-

sition of the rayons physician Dr. Ziegler, who, after 36 years of service, is retiring. He heard about my relations to the Krankenkasse, and asked me to intervene on his behalf. What can I do? November 20, 1929.

(signed) Heinrich Kunz".

Under his name was written with pencil: "Chairman of the superintendence committee. Received on Nov. 21, 1929 by deputy director Dr. Trautmann."

I could not understand, why Dr. Trautmann gave me this letter of Mr. Heinrich Kunz. After much speculation I concluded that he did it to show me that a lot of pressure was used to force him to give me this position. Otherwise somebody else, whom he would have preferred, would have gotten it. So, he wanted me to know that pressure was used. It made no difference to me.

So, that was it. It was now definitely a jackpot. A new, very pleasant life had started. My inlaws, Lisa, and Erich, lived only three short blocks away on Taborstrasse 37, and we also had a nice social life on account of the innumerable uncles, aunts, and cousins, about 100 of them, not all living in Vienna, but coming in all the time, mostly from Tchechoslovakia. And we were frequent theatre goers and opera and concert enthusiasts. And we still went on weekends on excursions to the mountains. We had a maid, of course, right from the beginning.

My practice increased from day to day and I had all reasons to be satisfied. Since we had a relatively big apartment and one room free, we invited one of Hedy's cousins, Minny Landler, from Bruenn, to live with us. We had pleasant

times together and went often on excursions on weekends. She had come to Vienna to learn how to make leather gloves, and later founded a company in Tchechoslovakia, which became quite successful.

CHAPTER 15

THE ARRIVAL OF FRANCIS.

We were now about ready to enlarge our family, and the big event happened on May 1st, 1931, when our son Franz was born. I especially was very excited about it, with strange feelings of pride. I was half crazy. I had stayed all night with Hedy in the hospital, while she was in labor, and till she had given birth at 2 A.M., and stayed on there till the morning, when I went home to shave. I then grabbed the camera and went back to the hospital to take a picture of Franzerl. That was the name, on which my mother-in-law insisted. He seemed to be good-looking, but I thought he was a beauty, though some disagreed. But after a few months he became a really good-looking child. He was now the center of the family. I had a few hard weeks or rather months, because I was the one, who got up at night to change the diapers, and he cried each time he got wet, and that happened about 5 or 6 times each night. That was hard. Hedy breast-fed him, of course. But the grandmother was wonderful. She arrived early in the morning, tip-toed into our bedroom, took him out of his crib and went out to bathe him, dress him, and take him out into the street for a morning stroll with the carriage, every day for months. Later on, Hedy and I went often out with him in the carriage, to show off.

In the summer of 1932, we all went on vacation together,

had rented a house in Unterach on the Attersee in the Salzkammergut. We had a wonderful time there. The grandfather was also very happy, and came often out on weekends. He still had his private practice at that time. Once he wanted to step from the garden door into a boat, with Franzerl on his arm. He held on to the post and put one foot into the boat, but continued to hold on to the post, while the boat moved away from the shore, with the result that they both fell into the water. Franzerl was for a moment under water, but nothing serious had happened to him. It was an enormously pleasant vacation otherwise and in every respect. That was in 1932.

At that time there were already dark clouds on the horizon. There was unrest in Germany, caused by Hitler. Hindenburg had become president and had hard times with Hitler. There were election after election, every few months, and the Nazi party grew, till on January 30th, 1933, Hitler won the majority and became chancellor. A few weeks later, they put the Reichstag building on fire, which gave Hitler a good cause to destroy the other parties, decree emergency measures, suspend the constitutional guarantees of free speech and free press, as well as other liberties. We in Austria had reasons to worry, although there was still tranquility and a pleasant life as before.

I myself had special worries at that time. My brother Carl had business difficulties. 3 people had founded a company and sold mineral water at prices, which were lower than the prices they had paid. When Carl lowered the prices too, to counteract their machinations, they lowered the prices again. This went on for a while, consuming Carl's reserves

and finally losing all of his customers. He lost also his bank credit, and had to go into bankruptcy. All of a sudden he had no business anymore. My mother still had the house and some tenants, who paid a very low rent, not enough to live on it. Carl's mother-in-law had a pension and perhaps small reserves, also a house with tenants, and on that they could live a meager life. It was almost a catastrophe. One day, my sister Else came from Paris to Vienna. She had lost Carl's support, which he had lent her regularly for years. She left Paris and all her art works, about 32 paintings in a gallery Zivy and 12 paintings in her apartment in Rue Daguerre. She had not paid her rent for a few months and left the paintings with her landlord as insurance. She had thought that she would be able to straighten out Carl's difficulties in Czernowitz and would soon return to Paris. But she could not straighten out anything, had to remain in Czernowitz and later in Bucharest, and never saw Paris and her paintings again. The poor soul was torn away from her work, which was very prolific at that time. She had had two exhibitions in her studio, and the critiques by prominent men of the art world were very enthusiastic. This was a catastrophe for her, and the end of her work as an artist.

Carl tried very hard to earn a living in many different ways. He concentrated now on the fabrication and propagation of the Darkauer Jod salt. He also started a business of candies with the taste and smell of pine-needles in Bielitz in Silesia, where a few of our relatives with the name Mechner lived, and whom he had visited often before. All that was not sufficient and did not develop into a good business, not enough

to make a living. He had hard times, and my mother, Else, and Walter also had hard times, and I did all I could to help them. I was a young doctor, had just started with my practice, and it was difficult to help them, although I tried my best.

We had our pleasure with Franzerl, who developed into an adorable child. He was friendly, always ready for play and jokes. It became noticeable very early that he was an unusual child. His knowledge of animals was remarkable and I had to draw animals for him, each time I came into the room. He had an abundance of toys, many animals, trains, etc. and we had to have special cabinets built below the window sills to store all his things there. When he was very little, he liked to make trains of all kinds of things, including dishes and pots. There were great many children books and we had to read them to him. Very early, he took to drawing and painting, and he showed a great talent. We still have quite a collection of his "art" work. He also seemed to enjoy music very early and I remember that he ran around the table in our dining room, which was his room for play and his bedroom for the night, when I played ^{on the record player} the scherzo of Mendelssohn's Midsummer Night's Dream. He ran and ran and I had to play it again and again. Hedy remembers that the famous aria "La donna e mobile" from Verdi's Rigoletto was also inducing him to run around the table. He enjoyed also being taken out in winter with a big sleigh by our maid Mitzi. They usually went to the Prater, which he loved to visit, especially in springtime, when he could take rides in a merry-go-round and the "Riesenrad", which he called Titata. The "Riesenrad", of which the Viennese

1933

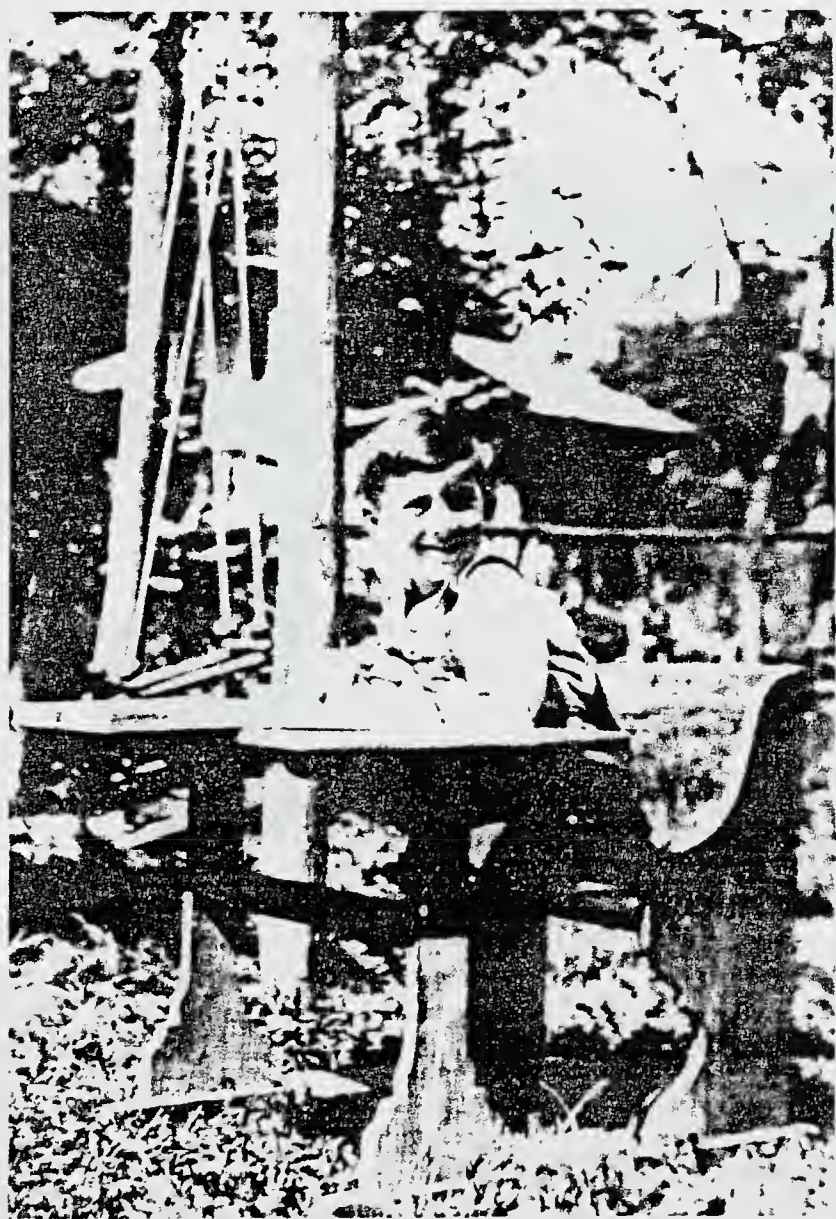
were very proud, was brought many years back from Chicago as "Ferris Wheel" and installed in the Prater. His pronunciation of difficult words was then spurious or rather childish. So, for instance, when he wanted to say "Eisenbahn", which means railroad, he said Ababa.

We come now to the year 1933, the year of the victory of the National Socialists in Germany. Great tension had started in Austria, when Nazi agitators began with provocative actions and manifestations. On account of that, Chancellor Engelbert Dollfuss suspended parliamentary government and prohibited parades and assemblies. Freedom of the press was also curtailed and shortly afterwards the Nazi Party in Austria was dissolved. Agitation and terrorism continued, encouraged by a virulent Nazi radio campaign.

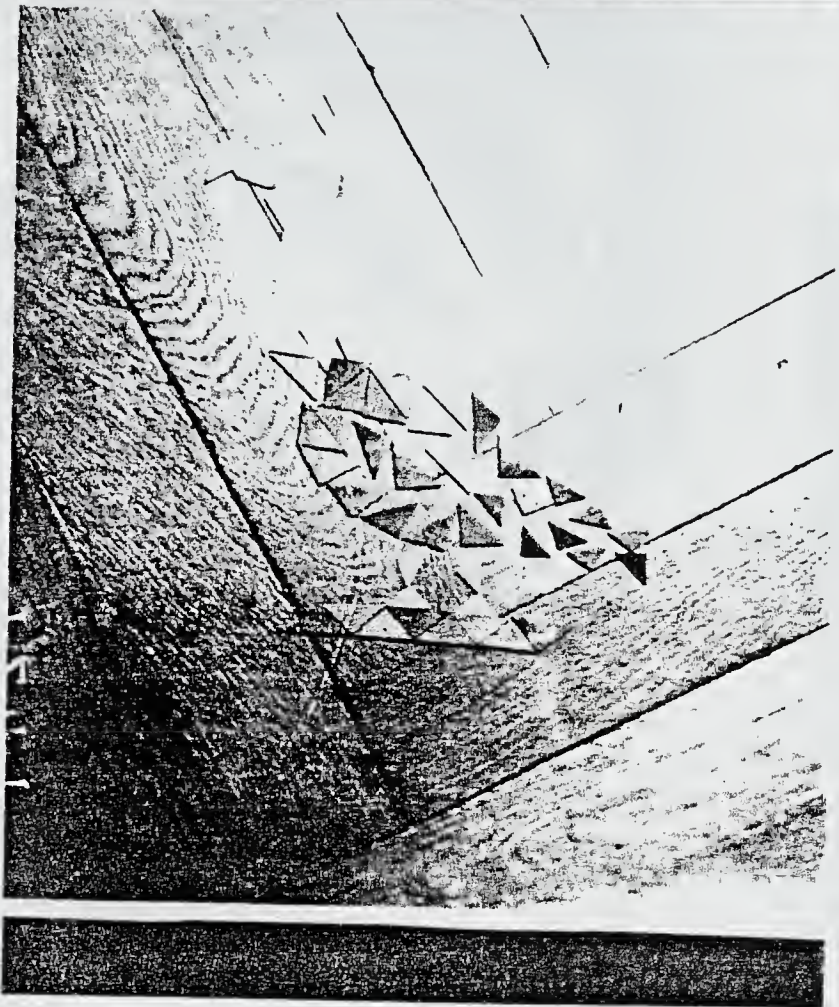
Nevertheless, for the summer of 1933 we rented again a house in Unterach on the Attersee in the Salzkammergut. It was not close to the lake, but much bigger and nicer. For that summer, I had invited my mother to join us on our vacation. It was most pleasant, since we had already many friends there from the previous year. We made many trips from there, to the Mondsee and St. Wolfgang See, also boat trips to Gmunden and Traunkirchen. We also once went up in a group to the top of the Hoellengebirge. We had to cross the Attersee in a boat and to my dismay, Mrs. Eberl, who weighed about 280 pounds, if not more, came also and sat in the boat. We were 7 or 8 people, and the boat was overloaded. Some more people, who had bicycles, went around the southern part of the lake to the other side. Unfortunately, when we were in the middle of the lake, a strong wind started, and white-headed waves started

hitting our boat. It was a nightmare, since there were only 4 or 5 inches between the water and the rim of the boat. I was a poor swimmer, and I saw myself already in the water, clinging to the boat. As a precaution, I took off my shoes. The 2 or 3 men, who had the oars, did their best to steady the boat. Fortunately, we made it to the other side of the lake. The climbing up to the top of the Hoellengebirge was quite an undertaking. We made it, and the view from there was a great reward for our trouble. We saw there the Attersee on one side, the Traunsee with the Traunstein on the other side, and in the South the Dachstein. We stayed over night in an Alpine house, and started then the way down, after taking some pictures. Mrs. Eberl with her 280 pounds had not made it to the top, and so we did not have her in the boat, when we crossed the lake.

There was a physician in Unterach, Dr. Angelis, with whom I once went on a deerhunt, and he took a man along with another rifle, mainly for carrying the deer in case we got one. We stayed in a mountain hut over night, and went out very early. We were not allowed to talk and had to avoid stepping on branches or anything that would make a noise, and finally arrived at a certain spot, where we could sit down on a kind of bench, having before us a wide grassy area and beyond it the edge of the woods. There we were sitting and waiting, waiting, waiting. Finally, a deer appeared. Dr. Angelis looked through the binoculars, and really, it was a male, since it had horns. He took his time to aim, and the other man also aimed at the buck, in case Dr. Angelis would miss. But sure enough, he missed, and the buck disappeared in the woods. And this is the end of our deer hunting story. We were, of course, very disappointed.



1933



Febr. 26, 1933. Vienna.



March 7, 1934



Grandma Gina and grandma berthna



Unterach, 1933. R. to l.: Hedy, Grandmother Bertha, Lisa, aunt Klemi, grandfather Dr. Benjamin Ziegler, and members of the family Eberl.



Once Hedy and I made a trip to Salzburg. We had tickets for the Festspielhaus (Festival Theatre), the famous Felsenbuehne (stage in the rocks), founded by and built for Max Reinhardt, the great theatre director and manager, to see Goethe's "Faust", played by famous actors in a spectacular setting. Faust was played by Paul Hartmann, Margarethe by Paula Wessely, Mephisto by Werner Kraus, and Helene Thimig played an important part in the Walpurgisnacht scene. She was the wife of Max Reinhardt. It was an unforgettable experience. We returned late at night by bus to Unterach.

My father-in-law came very often over the weekend, enjoyed it very much, bathed often in the lake. Lisa and Erich were, of course, also with us, and my mother and my mother-in-law became very attached to each other. There finally came the time, when our wonderful vacation came to an end, and we all went home to Vienna and my mother back to Czernowitz. I resumed my work in my office. I was away that summer for three weeks on my regular vacation and also each weekend for two days. Now I was soon enormously busy, and our life in our beautiful apartment was again as pleasant as before.

1933

CHAPTER 16

POLITICAL UNREST IN EUROPE.

But politically there was much unrest. On October 3rd, 1933, an attempt was made to assassinate chancellor Dollfuss. There followed in February 1934 a decree, dissolving all political parties except Dollfuss's Fatherland Front. Raids by government forces on socialist headquarters led to an uprising, quelled by military forces and by a bombardment with artillery of the Karl Marx Hof, an elaborate socialist housing complex, where the leaders had concentrated. These leaders were either captured or forced to flee. By this drastic action Dollfuss

and the Christian Socialists permanently antagonized the working classes of Vienna, and deprived themselves of what might have been the most effective support against the Nazi threat. Dollfuss announced a new constitution for Austria and set up a dictatorship on April 30th, 1934. This was shortly before we went again on our summer vacation in Unterach, when everything was relatively quiet in Austria. I had again invited my mother to come and be with us in Unterach.

But on July 25th, a band of Nazis seized the radio station in Vienna and forced the staff to broadcast Dollfuss's resignation. They then entered the chancellery in a surprise attack and shot and killed Dollfuss. The whole affair was badly mismanaged and the conspirators were caught. Action by Germany on behalf of the Nazis was made impossible by the strong stand of Italy and Yugoslavia, which concentrated large forces on the frontier. The Nazi coup had failed. Dr. Kurt Schuschnigg, close collaborator of Dollfuss, formed a new cabinet, committed to the same policies. After that, relations between Austria and Germany remained tense, especially on account of the hanging of some of the Nazis, who had killed Dollfuss.

All this happened, while we were on vacation and we did not feel the political tension there, only read about it in the newspapers. Our vacation was nevertheless most pleasant and peaceful, and we made many excursions by boat as well as by bus. Once we made an ascent of the Dachstein, one of the giants of that area, 9829 feet high. But the trip was not very well planned and we reached only the Upper Gosau Lake, and were satisfied to see the snow-covered top before us. On the way we passed through Ischl, the former summer residence

of emperor Franz Josef I.

Once I had an unpleasant experience, but it ended well. I had visited somebody in St. Wolfgang. I don't remember anymore, who it was, and Hedy was not with me. It was late in the evening, when I left and was supposed to take ^{a bus,} which went from St. Gilgen, which was at the western end of the Wolfgang Lake. I had to walk up a steep road to the main road and catch there the bus. But while I was on the way, running as fast as I could, I heard the tooting of the bus, and I knew that I had missed the bus, the last bus, and that I would have to walk home. My only hope was that a passing car would take me along. But I had no luck, many cars passed and none of them stopped. It was a dark night and I had to walk through the woods, which separated the Wolfgang Lake from the Mond Lake, then along the Mond Lake to a road, which connected the Mond Lake with the Attersee. It took about $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours till I reached home at about midnight. Hedy was worrying and at the window.

Lisa had once an interesting and very funny experience. She often went out on fishing trips with a young man, Mr. Geiringer, who always went for pikes, of which there were many in the lake, equipped with a fine fishing rod with a spinning wheel. He was quite an expert in spinning, which meant throwing the metal fish as bait far out from the boat and turning the wheel fast, bringing the bait and sometimes the fish to the boat. He lived in a house, which was close to the house of the famous opera singer Maria Jeritza, and her garden had a stone wall, which was at the edge of the water. There was a kind of a feud between Mr. Geiringer and Mrs. Jeritza. But just there, where the wall was, he liked to fish. But once he

missed the water and the metal bait with the many hooks got caught in the ivy branches, which grew on the wall. He could not get it loose and had to come very close to the wall. But that was not enough, he had to climb up from the boat onto the wall, using some protruding stones as a hold for his hands and feet, in order to reach the metal fish. But it happened that the boat moved a little away from the wall, while he was clinging to the wall. He shouted to Lisa to take the oars and bring the boat back to the wall, which she finally managed, ending the ordeal in which he was. It was the most comical situation, making us laugh and bringing tears into our eyes, whenever we spoke about it.

I should not fail to mention again Franzerl, who brought joy and happiness to all of us. He showed already as a very little boy great intelligence, amazing everybody, was always very friendly, and as far as I remember, never naughty, all smiles and kindness. In general, it was again a most pleasant vacation and, at about the middle of September 1934, we all went home.

There was much tension in the world, caused by the Nazis. On August 2nd, 1934, president Hindenburg died and Hitler assumed the presidency, approved by a plebiscite, two weeks later, with 88% affirmative votes, which gave him also the sole executive power. Legislation against the Jews in Germany was greatly increased, step by step. Many of them arrived as refugees in Austria, and we heard horror stories. Concentration camps were overfilled in Germany, not only with Jews, but also with people, who were known to have belonged to the Socialist Party, also with many clergymen. There was a "blood purge" in Germany, in

which 77 persons, among them general Schleicher and leading Nazis like Ernst Roehm, Gregor Strasser and Erich Klausener, a prominent Catholic leader, summarily were executed, because of an alleged plot against Hitler. After the Nazi putsch in Vienna, many Austrians, who had sympathized with the Nazis, left for Germany and formed there an "Austrian Legion".

One had the feeling in Austria that a great part of the population, and especially the police, sympathized with the Nazis. There came in January 1935 a plebiscite in the Saar Basin, and 90% of the people there voted for the reunion of that territory with Germany. On March 16th, Hitler denounced the clauses of the Versailles Treaty, providing for German disarmament. There was a strong protest by France, England, and Italy, but no further action was taken. There was for us reason to worry, but life went on as before. The Austrians felt secure, since Mussolini had once already taken a strong stand against Germany.

For the summer vacation in 1935 we had this time a different plan, a trip to Italy to a place, which a friend of a cousin of Hedy knew and recommended highly. It was on the Adriatic Sea, south of Rimini, in a private house, where we got meals also. The name of the village was Gabbice al Mare, and that lady with her child stayed also there. To get to the shore, we had to walk downhill quite a distance, back to the house to climb uphill. But it was a nice sand beach and quiet. Next to it to the north was a very noisy village, Cattolica, and we walked sometimes over there along the water to the crowded beach. On the way from Vienna, we stayed for two days in Venice, which Franzerl enjoyed very much, especially the San

Marcus Place with the many pigeons. We stayed in the Hotel Marconi near the Rialto bridge, where we had stayed, 7 years before, on our honeymoon. When we had dinner there the same evening, they put fine crystal glasses with high stems on the table, and Francis took one, when it was filled with water, and when he put it down, he did it with too much force and the stem broke. He was very unhappy about it, but the waiter replaced it with another one, and Francis was happy that he did not say anything. From Venice we took the train to Ferrara, and passed then through Ravenna and Rimini to our destination, Gabbicce al Mare.

We enjoyed the beach enormously and Francis was happy too. Very often in the morning, when the sand was smooth and wet, near the water, he drew figures in the sand with a stick, often long and complicated stories, which he explained. But the new waves soon took care of his drawings. I had taken in Vienna a train ticket for myself for Rome, wanted to see that city, since I was not far from it, and one day I left. I had only 2 days to stay there, but with a Baedeker book in my hand, I covered an enormous program and saw about everything I had intended to see. From Gabbicce we made some special trips to Ravenna and Rimini, unfortunately not to San Marino, a little autonomous state, which was so close by. Altogether, I stayed only 3 weeks in Italy, left Hedy and Francis behind to stay for another 4 or 5 weeks. Unfortunately, Hedy got sick, got a facial palsy, a condition, which she had already had before 3 times. She had even to stay in bed for a few days, and Francis took very well care of her, brought the meals to her bed etc. She wanted to come home, when she got sick, but I urged

her to stay on and she followed my advice. When she came home, I took her to the clinic Wagner-Jauregg for treatments. It took a while, but she was cured, was treated with iontophoresis. It usually disappears, as we now know, with and without any treatment.

My photoalbum shows me that there was an enormous family gathering in Tyrnau in Tchechoslovakia for the celebration of the 80th birthday of Sali Goldschmied, a sister of Hedy's father. The picture, taken by me, shows 32 people including the aunt Sali in the center on and around a staircase, and myself. (16 of those in the picture were later killed by the Nazis). The album contains also a picture of Francis as an ice-skater.

In that same year 1935, on October 3rd, not long after we had returned from our vacation, Italian troops started the invasion of Ethiopia, which was relatively easy to do, since Italy had two colonies adjacent to Ethiopia, Erythrea in the North of Ethiopia, and Somalia in the East and South of Ethiopia. They started to march one day over the border and soon were deep inside of Ethiopia. The Ethiopian army was very poorly equipped and was unable to resist and had to retreat. The attack on Ethiopia caused, of course, great excitement in the whole world. The League of Nations immediately went into session, and Italy was asked to stop the invasion. Session followed session and an armistice was proposed. The emperor of Ethiopia, Haile Selassie, went to Geneva and tried to save his country, but Ethiopia was soon completely occupied and Mussolini proclaimed the incorporation of Ethiopia into the 'Imperium Romanum'. Italy was condemned by the League of Nations

and sanctioned with a complete trade embargo. All nations were supposed to cut off all connections with Italy and to stop shipments of any goods to that country. The idea was to bring Italy on her knees and force her to get out of Ethiopia. This seemed to work in the beginning. But the embargo was not tight, and Italy was not completely isolated from the rest of the world, and was soon out of difficulties. When the embargo was proclaimed by the League of Nations, Mussolini had said that that would lead to a change of the map of Europe.

Soon other great changes occurred on the world scene. On March 7th, 1936, the German government denounced the Locarno pacts and re-occupied the Rhineland. Acute danger of war with France blew over, since all the powers were deeply involved in the crisis of the Ethiopian war, and not even France was prepared to force the issue at that time. Soon afterwards, on July 18th, 1936, the great Spanish Civil War broke out, started by general Francisco Franco and supported by the army and the air force. Italian and German "volunteers" joined the insurgents, while Russia supplied the government with equipment and advisers. It was a terrible, bloody war, which lasted 3 years and ended on March 28th, 1939 with the victory of Franco.

Now back to the year 1936 and the continuation of the happenings in our family. There came the time when we thought that it would be nice for Francis to have a little brother or sister as a playmate. Hedy became pregnant at about the end of 1935, and our calculations told us that she will have her child at the beginning of September 1936. She felt quite uncomfortable, and we knew that she will this time not go on a

summer vacation, and will have to stay in Vienna. But we planned a vacation for Francis and Hedy's parents, who went to Ischl for about 6 weeks. And we invited my mother to come to Vienna at about the time, when Hedy will give birth, to help us with the baby, which later proved to be a good idea.

There is a story about Francis, which I want to insert here, a funny story which makes me laugh, each time I think of it. As a little boy of 3 or 4 years, he was often taken on a walk to the Prater, a park not far from where we lived, most of the time by Mitzi, our maid. He liked to go there on a merry-go-round and other rides like the Ferris-wheel. Once uncle Marcus, who had come to Vienna on a visit from the United States happened to be at our home and went with Mitzi and Francis for a walk to the Prater.

At the entrance to the park, on the Praterstern, there were many fruit-stands, which they had to pass and Francis slipped under one of them, which was heavily laden with fruits. There was a stick there to support the main board and he grabbed that stick to get it out. He succeeded and the result was that the board went down and all the fruits went down into the street, hundreds of them, rolling down in all directions. Uncle Marcus and Mitzi were horrified and ran away, Francis with them. The poor vendor must have had a difficult job to gather the fruits and put them back on the board. That is how uncle Marcus related the story, which had caused him much excitement.

Francis was in general rarely naughty and it was not naughtiness which caused that accident, but rather curiosity, when he pulled that stick away from under the table. He thought that it was not in order that that stick stood up vertically. Miracu-

lously, he was not hurt and he could crawl out from under that table completely intact, but probably terrified.

CHAPTER 17

THE INVENTION OF VIPERIN AND THE ARRIVAL OF JOHANNA.

The year 1936 was for me a good year, not only because I became the father of a second child, but because before that I had made an important invention in the medical field, which made an enormous impression in almost all of Europe and beyond that area. It was a new treatment of the common cold, hayfever, sinusitis, chronic rhinitis and vasomotor rhinitis. It was in the form of an ointment, which contained a very small amount of a certain kind of snake venom and had to be rubbed into the skin of the forearm.

A company in Germany, Meck in Ulm in Bavaria, had put on the market an ointment under the name of Forapin, which contained bee venom, and claimed that it was very effective in rheumatic conditions, when rubbed into the skin over the affected joints. I became interested and started to recommend it to patients.

Among them was a lady, who had a severe sciatica, an inflammation of a sciatic nerve. This was an old patient of mine, who had all kinds of other medical problems. She had suffered for many years from vasomotor rhinitis, the main symptoms of which were severe attacks of sneezing and watery secretion from the nose, which usually started in the morning. Instead of handkerchiefs she had to use a bedsheet to combat the enormous secretion. These patients were usually under treatment by nose specialists. I had sent this patient once for treatment to a Dr. Weil, who had used cauterization of the nasal mucosa with an acid.. This treatment had to be re-

peated many times. There was some improvement, but afterwards the condition continued as before.

For her new problem, the sciatica, she started with applications of the bee venom ointment and rubbed it in daily. She returned later to report that the bee venom ointment had not helped. Asked about her nose problem she said that the sneezing attacks had ceased completely. I suspected that the bee venom may have had something to do with it.

I happened to have another patient, who was also suffering from vasomotor rhinitis and I called him up and told him to go to a drugstore and buy a tube of that ointment 'Forapin' and how to use it. He did it and a few days later ^{he} told me that the sneezing attacks had ceased completely. These were exciting news for me. I started now to use it on other cases, on patients with common cold and hayfever, on cases with chronic sinusitis etc., in all cases with amazing results.

Since bee venom is very difficult to obtain and therefore very expensive, I switched to snake venom, since snake venom is in many aspects similar to bee venom and much less expensive. I had to try out different kinds of snake venom, till I found the right one.

Before publishing my invention, I made a contract with a big company, the Serum Institute of the Austrian Government, securing for me good royalties. On June 19th, 1936, I spoke in the 'Gesellschaft der Aerzte' (Society of physicians) about my invention. It made a great impression and the next day all the newspapers reported about it under big headlines on the first page. The next days and weeks were like a storm, as the telephone did not stop ringing and enormous amounts of

mail started to come in. Newspapers reported about it all

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over Europe, and I have a collection of newspaper clippings,

(see photographs after page 247) 250
altogether 140. I published two articles in medical jour-

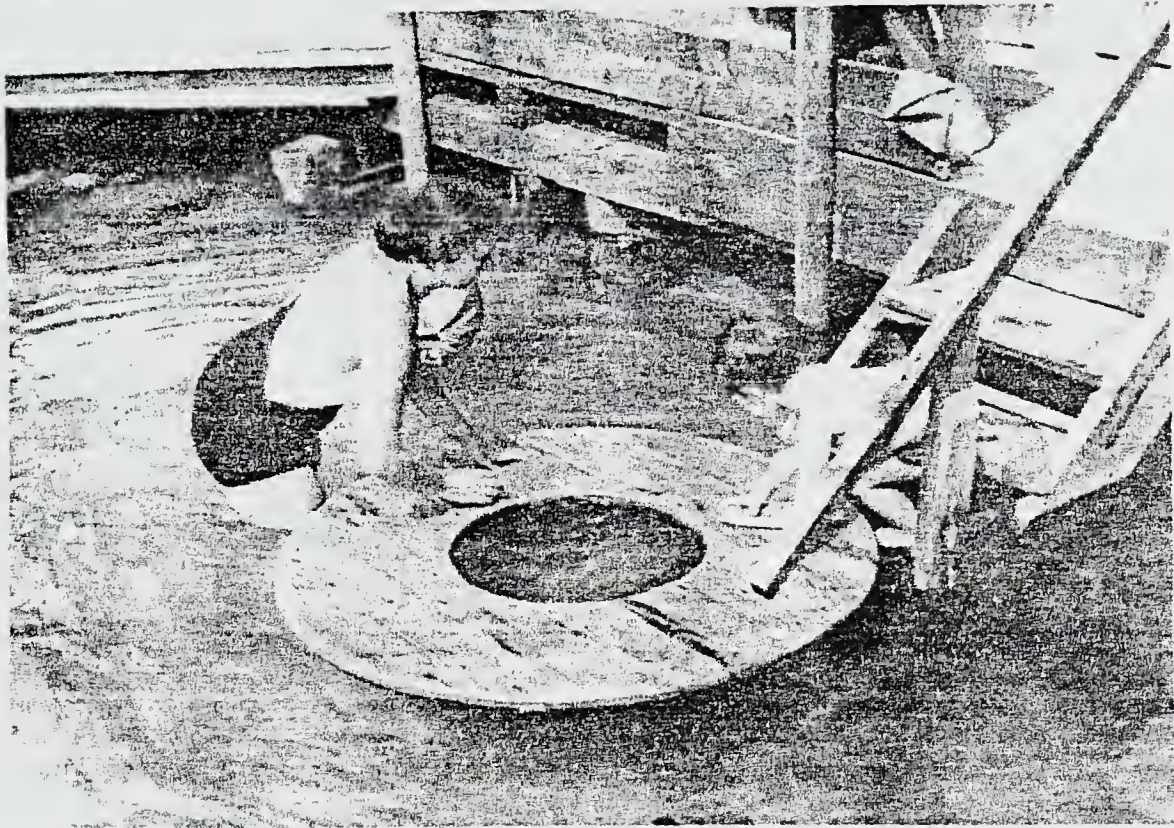
nals, one in 1936 and the other one in 1937. The name of the ointment was "Viperin" and this name was patented in many countries, but in some countries the Serum Institute came too late, in Germany for instance by a few hours, and there the preparation had to be registered under the name "Serpil", also in Tchechoslovakia under that name, in France under the name "Viperol", but in all other countries under the name "Viperin",

A few days after my announcement of the invention, a photographer of the Associated Press came and took 2 pictures of me, and other photographers came also, and my picture appeared in many newspapers. I should also mention that my brother Carl became the sole representative for Romania for this medicine under the name "Viperin".

Now back to Hedy. She gave birth on September 7th, 1936 at 6 P.M. to a very beautiful girl with blue eyes and blond hair, a splendid specimen. She received the name Johanna, but we called her Hannerl. In the afternoon, before she was born, Hedy was still at home and we had a visitor, Ernst Husserl, a cousin, and Hedy invited him for coffee. But soon labor pains started and I had to rush her to the hospital, and about an hour later, Johanna made her entrance into this world. Unnecessary to say that the whole family was happy about that event. My mother took care of Johanna at night, both occupying Francis' room. I remember how successful my mother was, when the baby woke up and cried, in calming her down by singing for her in a low voice, sometimes changing diapers if necessary. There came a lot of visitors in the next few days and weeks, a constant coming and going. And there was more and more excitement about



Grandma Gina and grandma Bertha



Summer 1933.



The four sisters, l.to r.: Bertha, Augusta, Rosa, Clara. This picture was taken in 1933, when they were all in Vienna. (Compare with the picture preceding page 25, taken about 40 years earlier).

Ich fürchte ich spüre mehr was das ist,
 dass ich Kraft bekomme, ich bitte um Fluch
 aber habe keine Aufmerksamkeits für Euch
 Courage nie zu schlafen, mit meine Dank.
 aber ich versichere, Es möge das versprechen
 Euch es mit Euch zu den Hoffe im Himmel
 lieben, denn bei Euch bitten wir
 ich bin gering geliebt dürfen Amen.
 und was kann mir das Heute noch gehen, Heute noch game Francis
 man gut und so spielen, gehört man
 gute Kinder, möglich, das I will
 über Gott danken

This is the last letter my mother wrote to me. I am trying to translate it.
 My dears! That much love I don't deserve in the condition in which I am now.
 Carl brought Dr. Zaloziecki and he prescribed Arsenic drops, a word which
 excites me. 3 times a day is impossible to take them, they taste terribly.
 Once a day is enough, I feel that I get some strength, but I have no courage
 to swallow them. I am plagued enough and what can life still offer me, when
 God gave me such good children. I have the best and more would be too much.
 I pray for good fortune and health for you and my grandchildren. He may pro-
 mise me that, then I hope in heaven to be in the midst of you. Amen.
 I would have liked to hear Francis play, if possible; the first time out of
 bed, that is why my writing is so bad. Carl will soon come to see whether
 I got up. Kisses to all of you, heartfelt. Will always think of you lovingly
 and beg of God to bless you. Embracing you all Mama.

my invention of Viperin.

One day, I was interviewed by a reporter of the newspaper "Der Morgen", and a few days later, on October 5th, 1936, a big article appeared about me in that paper. There was great excitement in the Serum Institute about that article, and it was not clear to me, what the reason for the excitement was. It became clear soon later, when I saw that the director of the institute, Dr. Csonka and the chief of the department of serology, Dr. Kovacs, both Hungarians, had tried to usurp for themselves the merit of having invented the medicine, by putting their names right under the name Viperin on the pamphlets which explained how to use the ointment, which was in every package wrapped around the tube. My name appeared also in that pamphlet further down, describing my "observations with that ointment". They probably had planned a newspaper article themselves, putting their names in front as the inventors of that treatment. Now they could not do that anymore. Everybody knew it anyway that I was the inventor, and I let things rest where they were. What these two people in reality had done was changing the amount of snake venom in accordance with information, which I had given them. That was all. In the beginning, before putting the preparation on the market, they needed information from me about the amount of snake venom, which was most effective. For that purpose they gave me different batches of ointment with numbers, without telling me the exact amount in units of snake venom in each of the batches. I tried them out on my patients in my office, and could finally tell, which batch was most effective. Now they could go to work and produce the ointment. They kept the amount of snake venom per



gramm of ointment as a secret to themselves, which was, of course, very unfair. Years later, when I was in Cuba, I found it out myself by experimenting with mice, that one gramm of ointment contained 20 mouse units of snake venom.

I should mention here that I had made many enemies with my invention, which I should have anticipated. Almost all specialists in the field of rhinology (nose specialists) were opposed to this method of treatment right from the beginning, before they even had a chance to try it, and were ridiculing me. But, on the other hand, there appeared later a number of publications in medical journals by prominent people in the field of rhinology, describing excellent results with that ointment. It was distributed in many countries in Europe and I began to receive nice royalties.

Looking at the photoalbum, I see in one picture my mother, Hedy's mother, Francis, and Hedy, holding Johanna in her lap. Other pictures showed Johanna, taken at different times, developing into a most beautiful child. One picture showed Francis on skis at the beginning of 1937, when I went with him to the Semmering in the Alps south of Vienna. At about that time, or perhaps half a year earlier, we thought that it was time that Francis started with piano lessons. We found a very fine teacher for him, young and pretty, a miss Feucht, and he showed in the beginning much interest and ambition. But it did not last long, especially because he had to practice and that he did not like. It was a pity, because he was so talented and had a good ear. I had decided to take myself also lessons with that same teacher and enjoyed it very much. The first thing I had to do was to practice scales and the diminished septaccord in major and in

Continued from page 247

minor. I had never heard about it before, but I liked it and did it quite well. Then she started with more difficult pieces, the Chopin raindrop prelude and some others, much more difficult ones. We stopped with Francis' lessons, because he refused to practice, but I continued for a while. Miss Feucht became ill and I was her doctor and found out very soon that she had tuberculosis of the upper lobe of one lung. What became of her, I don't know.

I had said once already that my musical education was very sporadic. I may have mentioned that as a little boy I had as a teacher for a few years a Mrs. Tomovici. She was a little hard of hearing, but in general a good teacher. Afterwards I played myself without a teacher and learned to play many pieces by heart. Before the outbreak of World War I., I took lessons with a fine teacher, Mr. Kraemer, at the Conservatory for about a year. At that time I was quite skilled in playing popular music, especially operetta music, of the many operettas, which were popular then, of Lehar, Fall, Kalman, Oscar Strauss, Eysler, Granichstaetten, Offenbach, Stolz, etc. and played them often for young people for dance. For one year after the war, I took again lessons with a Mr. Kostelecki, who was for many years conductor at the theatre, but now a very old man, with severe arthritis of the hands. I learned from him also a lot. I should add here that my interest in music was always very great and played an important role in my life. I was a frequent theatre-goer, also went to many, many concerts during my life, subscribed in the Metropolitan Opera for many years up till now. As a young fellow, I had heard great virtuosos in Czernowitz already before the First World War, like Artur Rubinstein, Arthur

1937

Schnabel, Jan Paderewski, Wilhelm Backhaus, Pablo Casals. Moritz Rosenthal, Fritz Kreisler, Bronislaw Hubermann, Eugene Ysaÿe, and many others. About some mentioned, I am not sure, whether I heard them in Czernowitz or later on in Vienna. Ysaÿe, a Belgian, was the greatest violinist of his time. Music fascinates me to such an extent that I can not talk while it is being played, not answer any questions, except for one word or two, and I get into a rage, when somebody wants to have a conversation with me, while fine music is being played. I can not bring out a word, while I am playing myself, and am almost unable to sing the melody or the text of songs, while playing myself. When I read or write and music is being played in the next room, I have to stop reading or writing. This is a handicap that I am unable to overcome. Fine, very low-keyed background music is an exception. But bad music, like rock- and roll-music does not have the same effect and that goes also for so-called atonal music. It took me a long time to accept and listen to music by Schoenberg, Bartok, or Stravinski, or Shostakowicz, which I slowly learned to appreciate, till I included them in the list of great composers, but they still don't fascinate me. I should mention here also that I like to sing, and as a young doctor in Vienna, I was a member of a doctors' glee-club, and we often gave concerts. We were a group of about 25 doctors, and many of them had good voices. I usually sang the bariton parts, but my voice had a wide range up to the middle of tenor and down to the middle of bass. I enjoyed very much the many rehearsals and then the singing in the concerts, which contained often in the program very humorous parts. I remember that we once sang the choral of the prisoners of Beethoven's "Fidelio", which was a great

success. I often sang to the accompaniment of Francis songs by Schubert and others, and it was always fun. One of my favorites is the song "The two grenadiers" by Robert Schumann, with words by Heinrich Heine. Another favorite is the song "Die Uhr" (the watch) by Carl Loewe, with words by Gabriel Seidl.

This is a copy of a leaflet, which was enclosed in every  package of the ointment, sold in drugstores, giving instructions to patients how to use the ointment. I do not have anymore an original pamphlet, have only this photography to show it. Also, below, the carton, which contained the tube.

CHAPTER 18

DARK CLOUDS BEFORE THE STORM.

It was now 1937 and we still lived in Austria like in Schlaffia, as if we had guaranties for peace, although dark clouds should have been seen on the horizon. We still were sure that Mussolini will protect Austria. We had a dictatorship in Austria, the press was under the control of the government and many events that happened around us in the world were kept from us. There were many warnings, about which we knew, like the re-occupation of the Rhineland by Germany, the formation of the "Berlin-Rome Axis", resulting from a visit of the Italian foreign minister Count Ciano to Hitler on October 25th, 1936, which should have been an eye-opener. A visit of Schuschnigg to Mussolini on April 22nd, 1937, was, as far as I remember, not reported in Austrian newspapers. In history books one could read now that Mussolini warned Schuschnigg at that meeting that Italy could not be counted on to give armed support against Germany, and that his advice was that Schuschnigg make his peace with Hitler and admit Nazis to the government. Schuschnigg rejected the advice. He was seeking and finding a measure of support from France and France's allies. As I said, we did not know anything about it, as it was not in our newspapers, and we continued to feel secure, and that goes for almost all the people in Austria.

We made our plans for our summer vacation, and went this time to Zinkenbach on the southern shore of the Wolfgang Lake.

It was a beautiful place and we enjoyed it immensely. On the other side of the lake was the famous "Hotel zum Weissen Roesel" (White Horse) and also the Schafsberg. Once or twice I went with Francis by boat across the lake, and we went up to the top of the Schafsberg. Francis was at that time already very interested in butterflies and we caught there a few beautiful Apollos (Parnassius), which fly generally only on high mountains. I remember that we drank there water from a well by lying down on our bellies. We had often visitors in Zinkenbach, among others Leon and Marianne Erdstein and Ernst Husserl. Leon Erdstein was a great pianist and became later Francis piano teacher and Johanna's too. Later on, back in Vienna, Francis went often with a patient of mine, a Mr. Streitz, who was a great butterfly expert, on butterfly hunting trips. This was the first year that Francis went to public school. His teacher, Mr. Turek, was full of praise about Francis, and he brought a report card home with straight I-marks in every subject. In the winter of 1937-38, I went with Francis on a ski trip to Annaberg in Lower Austria in the area of the Hochschwab for 3 or 4 days. It was amazing with what ease he came down on difficult lanes without falling. I stayed with him only for 2 or 3 days, and then Lisa came and stayed a few more days with him. These last few years were probably the most beautiful and best years of our lives. We lived without worries in a beautiful home, had two maids, and our whole family nearby, enjoying visits at our home.

To complete the description of Hedy's father and mother, a few more things, which I later remembered, should be added here, for instance some of his frequent remarks: "It is an art

to make something out of nothing." Or: "Today we have not spent any money, so we should stick out a white flag." Once he was invited with the rest of the family to the home of a niece, Mitzi Bruell, the sister of Sami Bruell, who served a soup with soupballs. He said to my mother-in-law: "These are excellent soup balls, ask Mitzi to give you the recipe." It so happened that my mother-in-law had made the soup and the soup balls herself at home, and had brought it to the dinner as a contribution to the meal. We all had a good laugh. He took every day a cold shower, and, while doing it, used to howl, and he recommended these cold showers to all his patients. All the members of the family had to do it, of course, too. His explanation was that cold water causes constriction of the veins of the skin, thereby accelerating the blood flow, eliminating toxic substances from the blood by way of the kidneys more rapidly. He specifically mentioned barbiturates, which many people take for sleeping, which remain for a prolonged period of time in the system and cause drowsiness as an after-effect, which are by that cold water-treatment more rapidly eliminated and thereby contribute to the refreshing effect of that treatment.

As to my mother-in-law, I remembered a song, which she has sung a few times and I learned to play the melody on the piano, and know also still the words. It was probably a so-called "Heurigen" song, which were sung in the wine-gardens in the suburbs of Vienna by singers to the accompaniment by guitars, and were always very humorous. As I said before, my mother-in-law had a great sense of humor, and here is the song,

first in German, in the typical Viennese dialect, then translated into English:

"A Mutterl hat a erschtegebör'nes Kinderl grad am Arm,
sie moecht gern hab'n dass 's schlafen tut, d'rum sagt sie
liab und warm,
mit aner g'wissen Innigkeit "Du Pamperletscherl Du,
Du Zuckergoscherl, Herzenspinkerl, mach heidi - heidu."
Hab'ns an Idee? Se'gns does is Weanerisch, holla diroeh,
an Witz, an Scharm, so red'n d' Leit in Wean,
vor so a Ausdrucksweis hat jeder an Respect,
does is der echte, unverfälschte Weana Dialect."

Here now the translation into English:

"A mother has a first-born child on her arm,
she would like to see that it sleeps, and therefore says
lovingly and warm,
with a certain heartiness: "You pamperletscherl, you,
you sugarmouth, you little heart, make heidi - heidu."
Do you have an idea? You see, that is Viennese, holla diroeh,
a joke, a charm, this way the people talk in Vienna,
such a way of expression is being respected by all.
That is the genuine, unadulterated Viennese dialect."

In 1938, Francis was 7 years old and Johanna in her second year. We had up till then a wonderful life, a life of love and harmony, and much happiness with our two children. Francis was a very handsome and lovely boy, and Johanna was simply precious. The grandparents came daily and enjoyed the children immensely. There were often family gatherings in the evening, as we had a very large number of relatives in Vienna. Everything was just fine.

All that came suddenly to an end, when we heard on the radio that chancellor Schuschnigg was invited by Hitler to a visit in Berchtesgaden on February 12th, and went there. He was there exposed to a brutal monologue by Hitler and received conditions, equal to capitulation. Under pressure he had to promise an amnesty to Austrian Nazis, who had been imprisoned, and furthermore to agree to take certain Nazis into the cabinet. On February 16th, Arthur Seyss-Inquart, a Nazi, became minister of the interior. On February 24th, Schuschnigg, replying to a speech by Hitler, re-affirmed the independence of Austria, and appealed for support against further demands for concessions. This speech called forth a good deal of enthusiasm in Austria. Last-minute efforts of Schuschnigg to arrange a reconciliation with the Socialist working classes came to nothing. As a last resort, Schuschnigg suddenly announced on March 9th, that a plebiscite would be held on the following Sunday, March 13th, on the question of Austrian independence, and ballots were to be distributed.

It was quite certain that this plebiscite would have shown a majority for the independence of Austria, and Hitler knew it. The propaganda for this plebiscite was enormous. On all streetcorners there were devices painted on the sidewalks with thick red paint: "Rot-weiss-rot bis in den Tod", in English "Red-white-red up to the death". The announcement of the plebiscite gave Hitler an opportunity to submit an ultimatum, demanding postponement of the plebiscite and the resignation of Schuschnigg. German troops began to concentrate on the frontier. Unable to resist, Schuschnigg resigned, and Seyss-Inquart became chancellor. On March 12th, the German

army began the invasion of Austria. No resistance was offered. On March 13th, Seyss-Inquart proclaimed the union of Austria with Germany.

The anxiety we endured in these few weeks is difficult to describe. Everything came so suddenly, so unexpected. Not only we, but millions of people in Austria were unprepared and surprised. Where were France and England? In the English parliament, prime minister Neville Chamberlain was asked what he had to say about the visit of chancellor Schuschnigg with Hitler in Berchtesgaden. Chamberlain did not open his mouth and only shrugged his shoulders. This was a signal for Hitler that England would not do anything, and that he could proceed. Many people left Austria in these 4 weeks, but most people did not, as the time for preparations was too short. We could not leave, of course, had to stay on and hope. I came into the living room on March 11th, when Hedy was sitting near the radio, crying. Schuschnigg had just terminated a fare-well speech and had said: "May God protect Austria" and the Austrian hymn was played. He had abdicated and in the next moment he was arrested.

CHAPTER 19

THE CATASTROPHE.

From that moment on the whole country was in fear. Preparations started for the arrival of the German troops, and it took only one day and they were in Vienna. There appeared flags with swastikas in almost all windows, enormous ones. SA-men in brown uniforms and SS-men in black uniforms marched through the streets with music bands, and enormous numbers of applauding and shouting onlookers filled the sidewalks. The enthusiasm and happiness of the Viennese was great. People who did not know each other, embraced and kissed each other.

Of course, great many were unhappy and stayed at home. But the others were in the majority and went out and showed their excitement and happiness.

The great German novelist Carl Zuckmayer has written such a good description of what happened in these days in Vienna, that I am tempted to bring here a few parts of that book, whose title is: "Als waers ein Stueck von mir" and the English title: "A piece of myself", and I am quoting from the English version of that book:

"That night hell broke loose. The underworld opened its gates and vomited forth the lowest, filthiest, most horrible demons it contained. The city was transformed into a nightmare painting by Hieronymus Bosch; phantoms and devils seemed to have crawled out of sewers and swamps. The air was filled with an incessant screeching, horrible, piercing, hysterical cries from the throats of men and women who continued screaming day and night. People's faces vanished, were replaced by contorted masks; some of fear, some of cunning, some of wild, hate-filled triumph. In the course of my life I had seen something of untrammelled human instincts, of horror or panic. I had taken part in a dozen battles in the First World War, had experienced barrages, gassing, going over the top. I had witnessed the turmoil of the postwar era, the crushing of uprisings, street battles, meeting-hall bravls. I was present among the bystanders during the Hitler Putsch of 1923 in Munich. I saw the early period of Nazi rule in Berlin. But none of this was comparable to those days in Vienna. What was unleashed upon Vienna had nothing to do with the seizure of power in Germany, which proceeded under the guise of legality and was met by parts of the

population with alienation, scepticism, or an unsuspecting antinationalistic idealism. What was unleashed upon Vienna was a torrent of envy, jealousy, bitterness, blind, malignant craving for revenge. All better instincts were silenced. Probably revolution will always be horrible; but the horror may be borne, understood, assimilated, when it has sprung from genuine need, is conceived out of conviction and true intelligence, if what has brought matters to the boiling point is a true spiritual flame. But here only the torpid masses had been unchained. Their blind destructiveness and hatred were directed against everything that nature or intelligence had refined. It was witches' sabbath of the mob. All that makes for human dignity was buried....

....That evening we took a cab through the city, for we were planning to meet in an apartment with others in the same predicament and discuss the situation. Horch was a man of nervous temperament anyhow, and today his whole body was shaking and he was constantly repressing tears. It was no pleasure to ride through Vienna in a cab at this time. The streets were so jammed with shouting and gesticulating crowds that we could scarcely move. In the square near the opera we became stuck in the mob. Tough louts, typical rowdies, pressed against the cab windows, and stared banefully inside. Already they suspected every cab of containing a fugitive or a 'bloodsucker.' 'Riding a cab - must be Polish Jews. Get 'em out - beat 'em up.' While my friend almost threw up from sheer terror, I rolled down the window, abruptly thrust my arm stiffly through it almost into the men's faces, and shouted something that sounded like 'Hei'tler, putting on the sharp Prussian accent of an army sargeant. I had already realized that this was the only effec-

tive faint. And so we finally reached the apartment. There a small woeful group had gathered, almost all of them people who within the hour had seen the foundation of their lives knocked out from under them. How often, in exile, have I witnessed such scenes: brooding, despairing people blown together by an evil wind and sitting like victims of a shipwreck on a sinking vessel or a reef. Oedon von Horvath was there, as well as Franz Theodor Czokor and our Friend Albrecht Joseph. Alexander Lernet-Holenia had come also; although he himself was not directly threatened, he felt he belonged with us. Very soon a kind of gallows humor came to the fore. We were concerned with the question of saving our lives, but being together for the last time this way we felt obliged to rise above the situation with a modicum of wit. When we parted, we all felt that it was for ever. Yet almost all the friends who met that evening would see each other again later on.

Several of my friends departed that same night. They were the wiser ones, for the frontiers were not effectively closed for several days. I did not want to go. Perhaps I was suffering from a kind of paralysis, of defiance or shame--such reactions may well be a form of nervous shock. In any case, I told my wife that I did not intend to go abroad. 'I'm not getting into any refugee train,' I said. I talked the wildest nonsense. I had a right to my native land, I said I hadn't done anything.' (Apparently I repressed the things I had done, my Berlin speech against Goebbels and my membership in the Iron Front, the opposition to the Nazis.) I hadn't 'committed any crime' that would justify persecut-

ion. Yet, by then, justice had vanished from Germany and persecution was raging blindly, barbarously, though under the cloak of 'order and discipline'. There was no safety in having done nothing against the tyrants; one's crime was in not having joined up with them. Quite aside from political or racial principles, anyone was liable to persecution. For the moment they decided you were different, you were an outlaw - which meant being exposed to a kind of annihilation far worse than death. The fear by which dictatorships keep their subjects in check is by no means the fear of death. A person who opposes the revolutionaries in a time of upheaval must count of being killed, and to my mind that is not the worse that can happen if you feel that all human decency and dignity is going to the dogs all around you. But to be shattered physically and spiritually, to be trampled under, crushed, crippled by humiliation and torture, and still have to go on living as a slave, without identity, condemned to continuing life in its most painful and hopeless form, with no end in view and no prospect of rescue, only to die at last more miserably than an animal in the slaughterhouse - that was the real horror that awaited us under the new regime. I mention all this for those who have not experienced those times or else - and this, too, seems to happen - no longer remember what it was like. What it was like surpassed the limit of imagination for the inhabitants of other countries at the time, especially the Western democracies. At this moment of confusion it also surpassed the limits of my own imagination, although I knew enough about it...."

I chose these lines of Zuckmayers book, because almost

all of that what he said applied also to me. I was in exactly the same situation as he, but the difference was that he could leave - and he left a few days later - and I could not, as I had a family and could not simply run away. He had no children and his wife was safe, followed him later.

When the German troops arrived the next day, enormous masses filled the streets, growing from hour to hour, shouting and singing. It was a picture never seen before in Vienna. But the anxiety and unhappiness of the Jewish people grew. Vienna, a city of 2 million people, had a large Jewish community. Altogether, Austria had about 200,000 Jews. We knew what had happened to the Jews in Germany, since the Nazis had taken over in 1933. We knew that they gradually had lost their positions, their possessions by confiscation, and their rights and freedom. We knew of concentration camps, of killings, and there was no end to horror stories.

It did not take long and all these things started in Vienna. There were arrests left and right, first of important people in high positions, then of rich people, but soon also of others. People who looked Jewish were arrested in the streets and were never seen again. One of the first things that happened was that people were taken out of the houses with pails of water and brushes, and ordered to scrape off the red paint on the sidewalks. These were the anti-Nazi slogans, which were painted with large letters before the Germans came. It was hard to remove the paint. They brought only Jews to do that work, mostly very old people and women, and they had to kneel down and scrape the paint off with little knives and tooth-brushes, while groups of people

WIRTSCHAFTLICHE ORGANISATION DER ÄRZTE WIENS

TEL. R-25-5-65

WIEN, L., WEIHBURGASSE 10/12

TEL. R-25-5-65

Z. ex

Wien, am 12. April 1938.

Ueber Weisung der amtlichen Stelle wird
angeordnet, dass der ärztliche Dienst ungestört weiter
zu versehen ist und daher Aerzte in der Ausübung ihrer
Praxis (auch nicht zur Nachtzeit) durch Heranziehung
zur Putzschararbeit etc. n i c h t b e h i n d e r t
werden dürfen.

Für die kommissarische Leitung
der Wirtschaftlichen Organisation
der Aerzte Wiens :



Missbrauch wird geahndet !

Giltig für :

Herrn Dr. Adolf Mechner,
II., Taborstrasse 64.



stood around, laughing and shouting.

They also came to our house to take me, two young fellows in black uniforms, SS-men, about 18 years old, and asked me to go with them. I resisted. I told them that as a former "Frontkaempfer", which means one who had fought in the First World War for Austria, on the side of Germany, I was exempted from that kind of work. Also that it was proclaimed over the radio that doctors should not be called for such work. They said that they had not heard of it and I asked them to call up their commando to find out about it and offered them the telephone. They looked in the telephone directory, but could not find the number, and finally they gave up and left. That was a hard moment for me and my people.

In the meantime, the excitement in the city rose from hour to hour, from day to day. Near our house was a large railway station, the Nordwestbahnhof, not in use for years, and the large train area there was converted into an enormous hall for gatherings, decorated with red and black flags with swastikas. On the second or third day after the arrival of the troops, Fieldmarschall Goering visited Vienna and the preparations for his arrival were enormous. More flags, larger ones, and enormous masses of people in the streets. He passed through the street, where we lived, standing in an open car, to the Nordwestbahnhof, where he spoke to the masses, asking them to join the ranks of the progress, telling them that everybody will be accepted. About the Jews he said: "Sie muessen 'raus", which means that they have to leave. And he added: "And they will want to leave". Two days later Goebbels came, again riding in an open car through our

street to the Nordwestbahnhof to speak to the masses. And then Hitler came. The flags had to be larger and they dug deep holes in the sidewalks and erected enormous beams, the kind of which we had never seen before. The day before, leaflets were strewn in the streets, which said: "Hitler alive to Vienna, back dead to Berlin". They must have been afraid now, as they put police with machine guns on the roofs of every house along the route. Jews were not allowed to look out of the windows and we had to admit to all our windows people, who were needed to applaud, and we had to stay in the other rooms, which had no front windows. To prevent an attentat the route after the meeting was changed and Hitler left with his entourage through other streets.

We were sitting near the radio for hours, trying to find out how the world, how the big powers reacted to the events in Austria. There were many who expected that there would be war and that our troubles would soon be over. Many thought that the whole thing would be over in a few months, that the Nazis would have difficulties to reign in Austria. Many people could leave right in the beginning and were able to escape to Italy or Switzerland. But soon the borders of Austria were tightly closed and nobody could leave anymore. We did not hear on the radio the news we expected. The so-called big powers did not do anything. We read foreign newspapers from Switzerland and France, anxious to read what was going on in the world. We found out that nothing was done, that the big powers had written off Austria. More and more bad news arrived daily, about arrests, about pilfering of stores belonging to Jews, which we could see across the street from our windows,

about simple confiscations and taking-over of large and small businesses by people who were before employees. Then started deportations to concentration camps in mass transports. The brother of one of our friends, Dr. Lindenberg, was arrested in the street and deported to Dachau. Two days later, the family received a note that he had died and that an urn with his ashes could be picked up in Munich. The father of that young man refused to go there. Such stories reached us daily and many, many people decided to leave the country. Many left illegally without passports or any documents. Some were successful in crossing the border into France or Belgium. But many were caught and sent back. Some were sent back from Switzerland, even after having reached Zuerich or any other city. The consulates of all the countries in the world refused to give visas to Jews. It sounds incredible, but that was the situation at that time. One had to have a passport in the first place and to get one was enormously difficult. There were long lines at the passport offices. One had to get first a paper that he did not owe any taxes to the government, a separate paper that one did owe any taxes for owning a dog. That alone took weeks, and with a passport one had to stand in line at the consulate.

For the U.S.A. one had to have an affidavit, and people had to get up at 3 or 4 o'clock in the morning, to have a chance to get into the consulate. There were chances that one could have been arrested by the Nazis while standing in line. Visas for Switzerland, France, England, Belgium, Holland were almost impossible to obtain. One had to have somebody in these countries who could intervene there, which

Der Landesärzteführer für Deutschösterreich.

Wien I. Weihburggasse 10/12. Tel. R-25-5-65.

Wien, am

Herrn

Dr. med.

Mechner Adolf

Wien II.

Taborstr. 64.

Da in kurzer Zeit die Entlassung der jüdischen Aerzte aus der Kassenpraxis erfolgen wird, möchte ich einzelnen Gelegenheit geben, ihre Praxisräume mit Einrichtung und Instrumentarium zu einem von durch mich ausgewählten Fachleuten festzusetzenden Preise abzugeben. Ihre Praxis soll sofort übernommen werden. Ich erwarte Ihr Angebot bis zum 28. Mai d. J.

Der Landesärzteführer:

Dr. Kauffmann e. h.

P. S. Die Antwort ist an den N. S. Aerztebund, Gau Wien, zu richten (I. Weihburggasse 10/12).

Translation of the letter on opposite page:

The leader of the physicians for Deutschoesterreich
Vienna I. Weihburggasse 10/12. Tel. R-25-5-65.

To

Dr. med. Mechner Adolf

W i e n II.
Taborstrasse 64

Since there will be within a short time a dismissal of Jewish physicians from the sick-fund practice, I want to offer each one a chance to give up their office rooms, equipment, and instruments at a price to be stipulated by experts chosen by me. Your practice shall be taken over immediately. I am expecting your offer till May 28th.

The leader of the physicians of
this country

Dr. Kauffmann.

P.S. The answer is to be directed to the
National Socialist physicians league, Gau
Vienna, (I. Weihburggasse 10/12).

took months.

It was obvious that we would have to leave also. I was sitting at night at the typewriter and wrote to friends in Australia and to Dr. Hansi Hilkowicz in New York. In Australia I knew a man, whom I had once met in Vienna, and he was also my patient for a little while. His name was Mr. Star. I got from him very soon an answer that he was willing to get a certificate for us. But I found out that I could not work there as a doctor, that I would have to study about 3 years at a University and then take examinations. So, I gave up on that. From the U.S. I got soon a promise from cousin Hansi, and there came soon afterwards an excellent affidavit. I took the affidavit to the American consulate, and got soon an appointment with a consul. He asked me many questions and when I told him that I was born in Czernowitz, which was then in Rumania, he told me that I had very poor chances to get a visa. I had not known anything about the quota system, had not known that having been born in Rumania, I would have to wait a few years to get the visa. Hedy and the children could get it, but not I.

We were in a terrible dilemma. It was hard enough to decide that we should leave the country, leave everything behind. I had a flourishing practice for over nine years. My waiting room was filled with patients every day from one to five in the afternoon, and some days, when I counted the patients, there were 60 and even 75 patients, including house calls. We had a beautiful home. To give up all that was a hard decision. And there were the relatives, our beloved parents and the others, whom we would have to leave

behind. Of course they wanted us to go, to be safe, no matter where, and besides us there were Lisa and Erich, who had to be saved. Lisa could get a visa for France, which our cousins Suzanne and Raymond could procure. She left in May. I will never forget the scene, when she left by taxi, and her parents stood and looked, both terribly excited, as if they knew that they will never see her again. How Erich got out of the country, a long and fascinating story, will be told later by Lisl. But we were in a difficult situation and had no place where to go. I had a friend, a Mr. Lackenbacher, who got a visa for himself and his wife for Haiti. I thought he was lucky. Some people went to Mauritius. Some girls went as house maids to England, but in general every country was closed for Jews.

CHAPTER 20

A SPARK OF GOOD LUCK.

But we had luck too. One day, I met a colleague, a lady doctor, in the street. She told me that she had heard that one can get a permit for Cuba easily. One had to deposit 3 500.- per person and that was all that was required.

It sounded incredible, but I found out that that was true. I had no money in a foreign country. I had taken out all the money that I had in the savings bank, before the Nazis came, and kept it at home. I had succeeded in getting out 400 dollars to Sweden. That was all. But I was lucky again. An uncle of Hedy's, Dr. Josef Feingold, came to our rescue from Paris. He was the father of John and Erich Forster. How he got to Paris is quite an interesting story. He had always lived in Vienna. One day, about 3 months after the Nazis had occupied Austria, he found in his basement 2 paintings, which he had bought many years ago. When he look-

ed closer at them, he found that they were signed by Adolf Hitler. Hitler's profession^{years back} was hanging wallpapers. He also painted postcards with water colors, which he sold in coffee houses, going from table to table. He must have tried to paint larger paintings, probably in water colors, and they were probably copies from old postcards. Anyway, Dr. Feingold found in his cellar two paintings, signed by Adolf Hitler. He knew, of course, right away that these two paintings could be of great help to him, and he went to an important Nazi functionary, whom he knew, to tell him about it, and there was great excitement. Soon people arrived to look at the paintings, and things started rolling. He was invited to see important people and he was soon asked, whether he needs some help. Of course, he needed help. He wanted to emigrate to France with his family. And soon he got the passports with visas for himself, his wife, and Erich, and soon they travelled to Paris. It so happened that they had obtained permits for Cuba, by depositing \$ 500.- for each of them, and also tickets for the trip by boat with the French Line, the boat "Flandre", which was to sail from St. Nazaire on the 11th of October, 1938. But they changed their minds and decided to stay in France and not to go to Cuba. And now they offered us in a letter to transfer the money for our trip to Cuba to us, under the condition that I pay it out to their son John Forster, who was still in Vienna, and had made preparations to go with his wife Stella to India. We accepted his offer immediately.

We now changed our plans for the emigration and decided that I would go with Francis to Paris and after our arrival there I would go to the French Line, cancel the trip to Cuba

for Francis, and he would be left with Lisa. This plan was the result of many deliberations. We wanted to have Francis out of that country. We thought that he was in danger there. It had happened that a Nazi had entered a classroom in a school and had beaten up Jewish children. Hedy especially was hysterical about it, wanted to save his life. Then we thought that the climate in Cuba was very bad. We had read that drinking water had to be bought in bottles. And finally, we speculated that, since we had a good affidavit, she could soon get the visa for herself and the children and go to the United States, on the way stop in Paris and pick up Francis. In the meantime, she could stay a little longer with her parents. And there was something else. We had decided to have all our possessions transported to the United States, and that Hedy would stay in Vienna till the movers had packed everything into the liftvan, to be transported via Hamburg to New York. I had paid for the transportation of the liftvan the full amount in advance, had prepared a list of everything that would go into the liftvan, All that was an enormous job, and I worked on it many evenings till late in the night. All that, while I was still practicing as patients were still coming, the same as before, and I still had to make house calls. And I had to procure the passports, which meant standing in line at the different offices, for many hours. I hardly moved away from the typewriter, arranging all kinds of things. There was no end to it. There was little time for reflections, for sitting together and talking about the sad things that have happened to us, the loss of everything we had achieved in hard work, put together for many, many years. Everything crushed, the family, the home, the profession.

And all the time the fear that they may come and take me away. When we heard the door bell ring, late in the evening or early in the morning, our hearts started to beat faster. They ususally came early in the morning to pick up people. I was all the time expecting it. When I went to bed, I told Hedy what to do, should it happen. I had a list of people prepared, whom she should call, people who perhaps would help to get me out. Once I had called Mr. Aladar von Duda, the man whose life I had saved about 9 years before. I could not reach him and he did not call me back. Was probably afraid to call a Jew. Was perhaps himself in danger, as a former mipister in the cabinet of chancellor Seipel.

I also had to make arrangements with the Serotherapeutic Institute before I left. The director Csonka had fled, and one of the employees, who had worked there in a lower position, as a bookkeeper or something like that, had become manager, and I had to negotiate with him. He agreed that he would pay my royalties to Hedy, while I was away. He was in general quite friendly and cooperative. I had asked him to give me a good amount of the snake venom to take along with me to Cuba. He agreed and I had to come again to get the material. I was astonished, when he gave me then a round metal box, about 4 inches in diameter and about $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches high, which was filled with a white powder. He explained that the powder contained a well measured amount of snake venom, and that they always prepared it that way, to simplify the process of making the snake venom ointment. He said that one gramme of that powder, diluted in distilled water, was the amount that goes into a 5-gramme tube of ointment. He did not tell me the number

of mouse units of snake venom that went into a 5-gramme tube of ointment and I did not ask him that question, since I knew that he would not answer it, as they had kept it to themselves as a secret. But I was confident that I would be able to find it out myself, and I was quite satisfied that he had given me that powder.

I am attaching here two letters, which I had received in those days. The first one was not dated, but arrived some time in April 1938, and here is the translation into English:

"The Leader of Physicians of the Country Deutsch Oesterreich
Vienna I., Weiburggasse 10/12. Tel. R-25-5-65
To Dr. Mechner Adolf, Vienna II., Taborstrasse 64.

Since within a short time Jewish physicians will be dismissed from the Kassen-practice (sick fund), I want to give some of them the opportunity to give up their offices, equipment, and instruments at a price, which will be stipulated by experts, designated by me. Your practice should be taken over immediately. I am expecting your offer before May 28 of this year.

P.S. The answer is to be directed
to the N.S. League of Physicians,
District Vienna I., (Weiburggasse
10/12)

The Country-Leader of
the League of Physicians:

Dr. Kauffmann e.h."

I never sent an answer to that letter, ignored it. Perhaps I did not realize at that time, how serious the situation was.

ARBEITER-KRANKENVERSICHERUNGSKASSE WIEN

FERNSPRECHER U-21-5-60 SERIE

I., WIPPLINGERSTRASSE 28

FERNSPRECHER U-21-5-60 SERIE

PB Nr. - /38/Smi/Sch.

Bei Zuschriften unbedingt anführen.

WIEN, 27. Juli 1938.

Herrn

Dr. Adolf M e c h n e r ,

W i e n .

Unter Bezugnahme auf die Kundmachung des Herrn Reichsstatthalters vom 4. Juni 1938, betreffend die Neuordnung des österreichischen Berufsbeamtentums, GBl. Nr. 160, werden Sie hie- mit in Kenntnis gesetzt, daß auf Grund der Entscheidung des Unter- suchungsausschusses Ihre Tätigkeit als Sprengel(~~Feeh~~)arzt unserer Kasse mit 31. J u l i 1938 durch fristlose Entlassung gemäß § 8 dieser Verordnung beendet wird, da auf Sie die Voraussetzungen des § 3 der zitierten Kundmachung zutreffen.

Durch diese fristlose Entlassung entfällt jede weitere Entschädigung.

Vorstehende Entscheidung ist gemäß § 12, Abs.5 der obzitier- ten Kundmachung endgültig; der Bundesgerichtshof oder die ordentli- chen Gerichte können nicht angerufen werden.

Die von Ihnen eingezahlten Pensionsfondsbeiträge werden ge- mäß § 43, Abs.1, der Bezugsordnung zurückerstattet.

Eingeschrieben.

Arbeiter-Krankenversicherungskasse Wien.
Der Direktor/Erstvertreter: *[Signature]* Der kommissarische Leiter: *[Signature]*

And here is the second letter and the translation into English:

"Workers Sick Fund, Vienna, I., Wipplingerstrasse 28.

Vienna , 27th of July, 1938

To: Dr. Adolph Mechner, Vienna.

Referring to the announcement of the governor of June 4th, 1938, regarding the reorganization of the Austrian profession, GBL No.160, you are herewith notified on account of the decision of the investigations committee that your employment as a district physician of our Workers Sick Fund will be terminated on July 31, 1938 by immediate dismissal, since the stipulations of paragraph 8 of the publication apply to you.

On account of this immediate dismissal there will be no further indemnification.

This decision is in accordance with paragraph 12, part 5, of the above cited announcement definitive. The courts can not be called on to intervene

The pension payments, which you have paid in, will be refunded in accordance with paragraph 43, part 1, of the regulations.

Workers Sick Fund

Registered.

The Representative

The commissary leader
(signed)

(signed,"

In another letter, which I don't have anymore or can not find, I was notified that I will not be allowed to practice medicine after September 30, 1938.

This was the day, as will be seen later, when I left Vienna.

The day of our departure came closer. I did not have the time to pack our baggage, had to leave that to Hedy. Only important papers, documents, I had to select myself, also some instruments, which I thought I could use in the emigration and I was so right. Before we left, I went to my tailor and had him make three white suits for me for the tropical climate. I had forgotten to order a new tuxedo in time, and left without it, but it was sent to me to my address in Paris and it arrived in time, before I left for Cuba, as I needed it on the boat, as a first class passenger. Fortunately, we had our passports already, for quite some time, and only Francis' name and picture had to be added to my passport, which was relatively easy. Unnecessary to say that I left a good amount of money with Hedy.

The only thing I did not have yet, were the tickets for the boat. The French Line had an office in Vienna, near the opera building, and they were advised from Paris by telegraph and letter to write out the tickets for the boat "Flandre" for me and Francis. But they made it difficult for me, postponed it for another day, each time I went there.

The night before I left, I had taken a big trunk, packed with my belongings, to the train station, to have the contents inspected, so that it would go with the train the next day with me. Everything was in order.

I went the next day early in the morning to the French Line, hoping to get the tickets fast. But I soon saw that I had there to deal with two very difficult people, a middle-aged man with a swastika in his lapel and a young woman. The man told me that he was against it that I go to Cuba, and

things like that. He then asked me to come back in an hour, and said that he will write out the tickets in the meantime. When I came back, it was again the same situation, that man trying to convince me that I should not go to Cuba. I then got very angry and shouted at them and said that they will be responsible for the consequences, since my baggage was already in that train, and that I will sue them and denounce them at the French Line. That had an effect, and in a few minutes I had the tickets. To my amazement, I saw this young woman from the French Line in the train to Paris. I still don't know why they did not want to write out the tickets for me and Francis for the boat.-

I rushed home by taxi, had just time to say good-bye to everybody and to pick up Francis and two valises. It was a heart-breaking scene, when they all, my inlaws, Hedy, and aunt Klemi stood there on the sidewalk, while we jumped into a taxi and went off, waving our handkerchiefs in the air. We arrived just in time at the train station Westbahnhof, about 5 minutes before the train left. My uncle Martin Sobel and aunt Clara were there to bid fare well to us. I could hardly say a few words to them, as the train had started to move.

We had a relatively nice ride in a first-class coupe, with fine upholstered seats, and since we were alone there, we sat at the window across each other, with a little board between us. I soon started to read books to Francis, and in general rested after the hectic hours that preceded our trip.

I was, of course, worried that something may go wrong

at the border. After an hour or two, in one of the stations, a high German officer joined us in the coupe, later a few more people. In the evening the train reached Munich and there was an enormous crowd of people at the station, shouting, applauding, and singing. It was the 30th of September, 1938, the infamous day of Munich, when Hitler, Mussolini, Neville Chamberlain, and Daladier had met there and agreed to sacrifice Tchechoslovakia, to cede the Sudetenland to Germany. At that moment, when we arrived at the station, Hitler took leave of Mussolini. Daladier must have been in the same train with us, going back to Paris. He must have worried, what kind of reception the French people would give him. We saw it right after our arrival in Paris, since our way took us to the Champs Eliseé. He probably had not expected it, but he got a triumphal reception, with enormous masses of people applauding and shouting. Daladier was surprised, as we later read in the newspapers. We happened to see and hear it from our car.

After Munich, near the German border, I saw woods and I told Francis: "You know where we are now? We are in the Schwarzwald." And he said with a loud voice: "In the Schwarzwald? That is where the Danube arises." The German officer and some other people in the coupé smiled. We came close to Kehl, the German border town on the Rhein, across Strassbourg. An inspection officer came and I felt my heart beat in my neck. He demanded to see the passport and the paper, which was called "Steuerunbedenklichkeitsbescheinigung" which showed that I did not owe any taxes. Another man examined our valises. Everything was found in good order and

they left. When we crossed the bridge over the Rhine, a stone fell from my heart. I did not sleep much that night, was too excited. In the morning, I was all the time at the window, looking at the French landscape.



Jan. 1, 1938



Dr. Benjamin Ziegler



Klementine Ziegler (aunt Klemi)



Summer 1938

March 1938 Augarten

CHAPTER 21

FREEDOM.

At our arrival in Paris, Lisa and Raymond expected us. We saw soon the Eiffel tower and passed along and then across the Champs Elysee and the long way out to the Plateau D'Avron, to aunt Louise, Suzanne, Nicole, and the cook Marie, where I stayed the next 12 days. My stay there was quite pleasant. We were taken almost daily on excursions and saw in these few days many of the more important sights of Paris, the Louvre, the Arc de Triomphe, the Eiffel tower, and went, of course, up to the top, the Place de la Concorde, the Notre Dame Church, the Bois de Boulogne, the Dome des Invalides, the Mont Martre at night, the Madelaine, the Moulin Rouge, the zoo in St. Vincennes, etc., etc. All that was shown to me either by Suzanne, Raymond, or Lisa.

During that stay I had to go to the French Line and cancel the trip for Francis, a terribly wrong step, as we found out later. I should have taken Francis along with me to Cuba. A big mistake, but who did not make mistakes in those days. Perhaps it was good and later somehow saved Lisa and Paul. Who knows? I had on the Plateau D'Avron my own room, while Lisa shared her room with Francis in a little back-house. While I was on the Plateau, a package came from Vienna with a smoking, in English tuxedo, which I had ordered at my taylor before I left Vienna, also the right shirt.

I got, while in Paris, a check of \$ 420.- at a bank, money which I had succeeded in smuggling out from Vienna to Sweden. That was all I had and took along to Cuba. The \$ 500.-, necessary for the landing in Cuba, I had received as a loan from the Alliance Israelite through the intervention of Suzanne, who was working there, together with Lucy, the wife of her brother Raymond. He had a production of fine custom jewellery, together with a friend, in the Rue Georges, as I remember. Poor Raymond! About 10 years later, he died in an automobile accident. He was a wonderful person.

There came the day when I had to leave Paris and take the train to Nantes and from there to St. Nazaire. I had to leave on the 13th of October early in the morning, and the evening before I had to say good-bye to Francis, who was already in bed in the back-house. It was the most difficult step for me, and heart-breaking. When I told him that I will leave in the morning without him for Cuba, he began to cry and did not stop. I tried to explain to him that we had to do it this way, he did not even listen and kept crying "Don't do it, Papa, don't do it Papa". I was heart-broken and had finally to end the scene, kiss him many times, and leave the room. I sent Lisa to him to calm him down. It was probably very difficult for her too. The next morning, early, I left and Suzanne came with me. She insisted in accompanying me to Nantes.

In Saint Nazaire, I could go already on the boat, did not have to go to a hotel. Before boarding the boat, I went to a little coffee house. It reminded me of the coffee house, which I knew from a painting by Van Gogh.

The boat left in the evening, and there was a dinner serv-

ed before we left. I got a place at a table, where there were three people sitting. One of them was a young lady, who was the passenger, while another man and his wife were guests of her, relatives, who did not travel. They were Swiss people and spoke French. So, I could not have a conversation with them. The waiter brought the menu and I ordered, among other things, artichokes. Although I had never eaten them before, I knew that they had to be eaten with the hand, leaf after leaf. The young lady, the passenger, asked her relatives in French, whether it had to be eaten with the hand. That I understood, and they confirmed it. After the dinner, I met some people, who spoke German. Soon the boat started to move, and I did not feel too well. I went to my cabin and had soon to vomit, felt sick and went to bed. I was quite sea-sick and could not get out of bed for about three days. We were moving south-west crossing the Golf of Biscaya, known for rough sea waves. Once I felt a little better, got dressed and went for a meal to the dining room. I got a seat at a table, where there were black people sitting. The moment I sat down, I felt nauseous again and ran to my cabin. I sent my cabin man, who was all the time, while I was sick, taking care of me, to the dining room to tell the Maitre d'hotel to apologize for me at my table to the other guests, and to explain that I had left so suddenly because I was sea-sick. I didn't want them to think that I had left because they were black people. I later found out that it was the Haitian ambassador to France and his family. While I was sea-sick, I always looked at the curtain hanging down near the door of the cabin and was moving all the time. This way I knew that the sea was still rough. But one day, the curtain

was hanging steady, and I knew that the sea was calm. I got up and shaved and took a shower and was feeling completely normal. I went up to the deck and was soon in the midst of a big crowd of German speaking people, refugees as I, and was in good company. But in general, I was very depressed and was all the time thinking of the dear ones I had left behind in Europe.

The boat took the route to the Azores Islands, which we passed at night, saw the lights of a bigger city, and from there straight to Porto Rico, where we went on land for the first time. The next stop was Santo Domingo, where we visited the cathedral, where there was the tomb of Christopher Columbus. The sea was calm all the time, and we were lying a lot in the sun. I went twice or 3 times for a swim in a small swimming pool. The next stop was Haiti. I had written letters on the boat, and there I went to the post office to get stamps and to mail them. To my astonishment, I met there my friend Lackenbacher, whom I had mentioned before and had said that he had gotten a visa for Haiti. He was very glad to see me again and took me ^{by} taxi to his home, to introduce me to his wife. They were very unhappy, since he could not make a living there, and his wife had to work as a seamstress, doing mostly repair work. He had to wait in Haiti a long time, till they got their immigration visas for the United States.

1938

CHAPTER 22

CUBA. DESPAIR.

A few days later, we were in Havana, Cuba. The whole voyage had taken 14 days.

The disembarcation took a very long time, as an officer of the immigration department examined the papers of each passenger very thoroughly. While this was going on, a man from the Joint Distribution Committee came on board and explained

1938

the situation, in which refugees from Europe will find themselves in Cuba, and what the chances of getting visas for the immigration to the United States were. He explained the quota system and the waiting period for people from different countries of origin. For me, this man had very bad news. I had expected that I would have to wait a few weeks or perhaps months, but he told me that it will take years, since I was born in Rumania, and the Rumanian quota was very small, only 375 per year. I was shocked, and fell for the next few days into deep despair. All my plans had suddenly come to naught.

For the first night I went together with some people I had befriended with on the boat to a hotel in the old city of Havana, at the corner of Calle Obispo and Calle Cuba. I woke up early on account of enormous noise by a streetcar, which passed near the hotel through a narrow street, autos, vendors. My friends and I went in the morning to look for other quarters and we found a nice rooming house on the Prado, a wide boulevard with an alley with trees. I got there a room, which I was to share with a man I knew from the boat, a Mr. Cling, who came from Berlin. It was a different world, which I had not known before. I was not completely unprepared, since I had gone on land, a few days before, in three different Latin-American cities, San Juan in Puerto Rico, San Domingo in the Dominican Republic, and Port au Prince in Haiti, all of them big cities, though each quite different in appearance. Very similar the large noisy crowds in San Juan and Port au Prince, the great number of black people, the many vendors. Havana was much larger, also full of life, and noisy, and in many respects more beautiful, with its boulevards,

parks, and many imposing, big buildings, old, but impressing in style. Very beautiful the Malecon, a long avenue along the seashore and near the entrance to the port, running along a wide canal between the city and a peninsula with the old Castel Moro.

I became very soon acclimatized and found my way around. I had learned Spanish, while still in Vienna, with the help of Heini, Hedy's uncle, who had lived for many years in Panama, and who had come almost daily to give me lessons, altogether about 20 times. And while on the boat, I had a good Spanish grammar, and tried to acquire more knowledge of that language. Having a talent for languages, I was soon able to talk and understand people.

I went soon to the American consulate to ask about my chances to get an American immigration visa. The answer was as devastating as the information I got on the boat when it arrived in Havana: Many years of waiting. That threw me again into despair and depression. I could figure it out myself that I would have to wait many years on account of the Rumanian quota. I had applied for immigration at the consulate in Vienna in June 1918. There were so many people ahead of me, Rumanians still in Rumania, and the many Rumanians living in many countries in the world, in Austria, Germany, Poland, Hungary, and elsewhere. The number was in the 100.000ds, and I was told that it may take as long as 80 years till my name will be at the top of the list.

I spoke with many people about my situation and also, among other things, about my invention of Viperin. Some of them thought that this might help me to get the immigration

visa. That gave me a little hope and I thought much about it.

I had another problem: Living expenses. I had brought with me only 420 dollars, and it was obvious that this small amount of money will not last very long. It had shrunk already considerably. My roommate, Mr. Oling, asked me one day about my financial situation. He had thought that I must have a lot of money, since I was dressed neatly, was wearing a fine white suit, had fine shirts, etc. I told him the truth and he was amazed how little I had. He advised me to go the next day to the refugee committee like most of the others and ask to be enrolled, which I did. From then on, I received regular support money and my worries about money had come to an end. I could even save a little money and put it in the bank. Every two or three days I went to the bank and took out 5 or 10 dollars, rarely more. It was enough for the coffee house in the morning and for the restaurant at noon and in the evening, also for the wonderful fruit I bought every day, for the movie theatre in the evening, for the laundryman, newspaper, postage, for the development of films and prints, great numbers of them, and, of course, for rent. Everything was cheap and I could afford it.

It did not take long and I got some patients, refugees, who needed advice, and I earned a few dollars. And there was a druggist, who filled my prescriptions, given over the phone, delivered them even to the homes. My fee was small, usually 1 to 2 dollars for a house call, seldom more. I was satisfied.

I had taken with me to Cuba the name and address of a Mr. Alberto Johnson, who was an importer of medicines from

many European countries. I was told that he might be interested in distributing Viperin in Cuba. So, I went to him soon after my arrival in Havana. He was a fine gentleman and showed great interest in Viperin. He had two brothers, who had an enormous drugstore under the name Johnson & Johnson, the second largest in Cuba, and he introduced me to one of his brothers, Dr. Carlos Johnson. We had long discussions about Viperin and the possibility of manufacturing and distributing it in Cuba. They decided that they themselves would not undertake it, but that they knew of other companies, which would do it. I told them that I had to do some experimental work before doing anything else and they recommended me to a man, who had a big medical laboratory, one of the biggest in Havana. This man was very friendly and obliging and told me that I can use his laboratory whenever I wanted and for any kind of experimental work. What I had to do were experiments on mice, in the first place to find out the number of mouse units that went into one gramme of ointment. The powder, which I had taken along from Vienna, was supposed to contain in one gramme the amount of snake venom that went into 5 grammes of ointment. I had to find out whether that information was correct. Later on, I would have to find a snake venom that would replace the snake venom, which we had used in Europe, which was the venom of *Vipera ammodytes*, a snake, which is very common in Yugoslavia and other Balkan countries. I will now leave the story of my experimental work, will later come back to it, since important things, which had happened in the meantime, have to be described.

I was receiving letters from Hedy and also from Lisa and

Francis and had written to them frequently. Pictures, which I had sent them, showing me in a white suit with a straw hat seemed to have impressed them very much. In one of the letters Hedy wrote that the Nazis had come to look for me on the day after the so-called Crystal-Night from the 9th to the 10th of November, 1938, when they had put on fire 17 temples and 61 Houses of Prayer in Vienna and the other cities in Austria and had arrested and sent to concentration camps 7800 Jews. In Germany they had also destroyed by fire innumerable temples and arrested 26.000 Jews. That was 40 days, after I had left Vienna. How lucky I was! Hedy had a hard time there, all alone in the apartment with Johanna and her parents nearby, since restrictions for Jews became stricter and life almost unbearable. This is well described by Hedy in an interview, which will be attached here. We had hoped that she will get her American visa soon after I left, we thought within 3 or 4 months, but it took more than a year, till the American consul gave her the visa. In the meantime she had to handle the packing of the furniture and all our belongings into a liftvan and then to move to the apartment of her parents. She was threatened by the Gestapo frequently with being sent to Poland, if she will not leave soon. But how could she without a visa? What Lisa and Francis went through, is also well described in interviews with them, and will be attached later, to give you a first-hand description and well-rounded picture of their lives. This will allow me to restrict myself to describing how I fared in Cuba.

I should, for instance, mention that about two weeks after my arrival in Havana, Leo and Ella Ziegler arrived there

also. Before I had left Vienna, I saw them and told them that I am going to Cuba. They were astonished, but did not say a word that they also will be going to Cuba, 14 days later. They kept it as a secret, probably in fear that the Germans may learn about their departure and somehow interfere with their plans. Anyway, I learned about their arrival through Ella's brother Maurice Ziegler, who was already in New York, and I went to the boat when it arrived. Although my Spanish was not yet good, I intervened on their behalf, using all kinds of excuse and explanations, and finally succeeded in freeing them, so that they could leave the boat instead of being sent to the camp Tiscornia for quarantine like all the others. They were very happy about it. I had prepared a hotel room for them and instead of flowers a basket full of fruits. A few days later, I took them to the Malecon, where they found a nice little apartment, where they stayed for many months. We often met in their apartment, a few times went on small excursions, often met in a little Chinese restaurant for lunch. Ella got her visa for the United States earlier than Leo, perhaps because she was born in Egypt and a visa number was free at that time for that quota, and she joined her father Marcus Ziegler in Chicago. Leo had to wait a few months longer, had rented a little room somewhere in Vedado, a suburb of Havana. He had a talent for painting and went almost daily out with an easel and canvas to paint, always acuarells. Some were quite good, and with the help of Ella, while she was there, he framed a great number of them and once arranged an exposition in the lobby of a big hotel, and sold a few of them. Ella worked in Chicago

as a maid in a hotel, had to wash bathrooms and scrub floors, worked very hard. Later Maurice settled in Los Angeles, and when Leo arrived in the United States too, made arrangements for Leo and Ella to settle in California too. They wanted to settle in a place far from a big city and they bought, high up in Santa Ynez, a delapidated farm house and farm land with a chicken farm. They remodeled the house nicely, planted great many walnut trees, which would bear nuts in about 4 or 5 years, and in the meantime raised and handled about 2000 chicken, and sold the eggs. They lived not only on the gains from the chicken farm. Leo got a position as an art teacher on four different high schools. They had bought a little car and he had learned how to drive, and he drove every day from one high school to another one, and he worked and earned a living this way, till he died at the age of 81 or 82, some 10 or 12 years ago. Ella still lives there about 80 years old. She once was a real beauty, and still shows it. We had visited them there three times, once with Nancy. I wrote all that to show a real success story of two refugees from Europe.

Now back to me in Havana. I should mention that I was there in the middle of a bunch of young and middle-aged men, who met almost every evening at a rendezvous place on the Prado, a promenade with many coffee houses on wide terraces,

where there was always music being played, across the street from the beautiful capitol. Great numbers of people were sitting there or promenading till late at night. One of my friends, Mr. Oling, was my room-mate, and another one, Mr. Kollitz, was the only one, whom I later met in New York and we remained friends and see each other quite often. There was

also a Mr. Luxemburg, a very fine fellow, a Mr. Herrnstadt, a Mr. Kreuzberger, and a few others, whose names I have forgotten. When I missed them at our rendezvous place, which happened a few times when they had gone to a movie without me, I was quite disappointed and felt lost, and went to my room to read or write letters. I was sitting at my typewriter all the time, during the day and often till late at night, writing letters. But evenings I liked to be with these people, discussing the news, getting opinions. Often we gathered around a table to play cards, usually poker, for money, which was fun. There came New Years Eve, when the whole group of us went to the casino, where there was a big celebration, all of us wearing tuxedos. And then came carnival time, celebrated on the Prado and Malecon with big parades, quite an event in Havana.

I should also mention that I was taken to butterfly hunting in Havana, in a special way. Since I had no net, I used to hit the butterflies with my stiff straw hat and pick them up from the ground; kept only those, which were not too badly damaged. In this way I got a small collection together. Once I had sent a wooden cigar box with butterflies to Francis, with pieces of cork glued in to hold the pins. I was careful and had put the pins in firmly, had selected really beautiful specimens. But unfortunately, they arrived in France completely destroyed, probably because the box was thrown and hit hard in post offices and during the voyage on the boat. Francis was disappointed, but at least he saw the good will. I received from him quite a few painted postcards, which showed birds or butterflies, which I had in my room, posted on the

wall. I have a collection of letters, written by Francis, and I had given most of them to Francis, some time ago, also many drawings and paintings.

I am here inserting two of his letters, one preceding this page and the other one following this page. The first one was written on or about December 13th, 1938, exactly 2 months after I had left him in France, when he was $7\frac{1}{2}$ years old, written in German, and I am giving here the translation into English.

Dear Papa!

Yesterday there was a cat in the garden. And just then it rained and the door of the house was already closed, because it was already night. The cat had cried all the time. I am very well here. I am going now into a children home, but only in the afternoon and only on Monday, Tuesday, and Friday. I did not wait for any letter. I am sorry for you, because you have to work so hard. The butterfly arrived completely squashed. If you send me again one, then put it into a box. I have not been yet to Snow-White, but instead of that I got a book from Mrs. Dr. Saxel. I am very happy with the two big beautiful butterflies. I will send you with this letter a drawing. I received from Vienna the calculating machine. Lisa received also from Vienna two pictures of Hannerl; I would like to send them to you, but Lisa would not let me have them. How are you? Send also to Mr. Streitz a few butterflies. When will you go to America? Lets hope very soon. Have you seen already butterflies as big as this letterpaper?

Many kisses from Franzl.

The second letter was written on February 1st, 1939, and here is the translation into English:

Dear Papa!

I have slept today the first time in our new apartment. Today I am staying the whole half afternoon in the hotel Scribe, while Lisa is giving a lesson. How are you? I am very well. Have you already been on a crocodile hunt? Have you already watched how they catch sharks?

I have 89 francs and for 12 francs I had bought something for Suzanne. She has today birthday. We eat every Wednesday at Lucy's. For tomorrow we are invited to Jaquot (he is a nephew of Lucy). I am very glad. We will go up to the top of the Eiffeltower. I will make an airplane for myself, which will really fly.

I send regards to aunt Ella and uncle Leo and kisses and for you many kisses from

I. February, 1939

Franzi.

Two more letters, written later, will be inserted later on.

After my room-mate, Mr. Oling, had moved out, I got for a short time another room-mate, a Mr. Barasch, and, following him, again another one, a Mr. Platschek, a very fine guy. Soon afterwards, he found a rooming house on the Malecon, and we both moved there, had two separate rooms and all meals there at a modest price. It was a fine house, at the corner of Calle Lealtad, with a big terrace and a view of the ocean and further to the right of the Castel Morro, where I could watch the boats coming from Florida, also the daily ferryboats, loaded with trains. Sitting on the terrace was quite a pleasure. I had made a good change.

I should mention here that at about that time I got a letter from Julius Ziegler, in which he wrote that a Mrs. Else Wagner will arrive on a certain day in Havana, and he asked me to help her, as much as I could, to get established in Havana. It was a very nice, fine lady, about at least 15 or 20 years older than I, and we became good friends. She was never married, was the life-long friend of Julius Ziegler's former boss, a Mr. Spielmann. Mr. Spielmann's two sons, both homosexuals, came later also to Havana and we met often in coffee-houses. Later, when Hedy and Johanna came to Havana, we still met Mrs. Wagner, and Hedy seemed to like her. Soon afterwards, Mrs. Wagner got her visa for the United States, where Mr. Spielmann had already arrived, and they both settled in Miami.

In the meantime, I had received from Hedy the good news that the liftvan had been packed and sent to Hamburg. This visa at the beginning of the summer of 1939, and at about that time Lisa had sent Francis for the summer to friends in Le Touquet-Paris Plage on the English Channel, who were taking care of other children too, and where he had it very good. Lisa had started working in Paris for Raymond. These were relatively good news.

But the general situation in the world grew worse with each day. Hitler, after having taken over the Sudetenland, succeeded soon in taking over the rest of Tchechoslovakia on March 15th, 1939, incorporating it into Germany as a protectorate. Slovakia and the Carpatho-Ukraine became independent, but soon were put by Tiso, who headed the state, also under German protection. The German colossus had become enormously

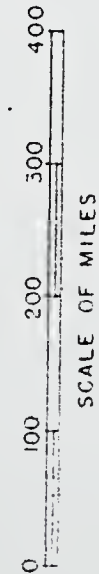
big.

It did not take long and Poland appeared to become the next victim. Starting with a barrage of threats in speeches and in the press, Hitler told the world clearly, what would come next. Faced by the project of limitless German expansion, the British and French pledged aid to the Poles in case of action threatening Polish independence. The British made also every effort to draw Russia into the anti-aggression front, but the Russians were suspicious and insisted on complete reciprocity in defense. On August 20th, the world was startled by the conclusion of a trade treaty between Germany and Russia, followed the next day by the announcement that Germany and Russia were about to conclude a non-aggression pact. Coming after months of negotiation between England, France, and Russia, this move was regarded as a demonstration of Bolshevik perfidy. In England and France, as well as in Germany, military preparations started. The British government reiterated its pledge to Poland. The German-Russian pact was signed in Moscow by the German foreign minister Ribbentropp and then on August 23rd in Berlin by Molotow, the Russian foreign minister.

The map shows the political situation in Europe, as it prevailed in August 1939, shortly before the start of the Second World War. The Rhineland was already re-occupied by Germany in 1936. Austria was occupied in March 1938. Tchechoslovakia lost first the Sudetenland in September 1938, and the rest was occupied by the Germans in March 1939, except for the eastern part, which became an autonomous state of Slovakia and Carpatho-Ukraine under Tiso, who put it right away under the protection of Hitler. Memel in the north was also occupied by Germany in March 1939.

CAMPAIGN IN POLAND, 1939

GERMAN AGGRESSIONS, 1936-39



Cuban All America Cables

ANTES

Commercial Cable Co. of Cuba

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FECHA DE RECEPCION

SET 19 1939

CUBA 226 ESQ. A O'REILLY - HABANA

THE INTERNATIONAL SYSTEM

TELEFONOS: M-9801 - M-9808

EL SIGUIENTE TELEGRAMA FUE RECIBIDO

"VIA CUBAN ALL AMERICA"

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LC RPFCS5.00 MECHNER

MALECON 507 HABANA

UNTERSUCHUNG 26/10 DRAHTE SUZANNE SCHIFFSKARTE

1939 SEP 19 AM 8 57

This telegram I received on Sept. 19th, 1939. It announced that Hedy and Johanna will have an examination at the American Consulate, which meant that they will receive the American visa. She asked me that I send a telegram to our cousin Suzanne in Paris to ask her to procure tickets for the boat to America.

I sent the following telegram to Suzanne:

Hedy recevra U.S. visa 26 Octobre arranger Hicem passage vapeur hollandais italien.

Adolf

tember 3rd, England and France declared war on Germany, thus initiating the Second European War of the twentieth century.

I had enough reason for grave worries for the lives of Hedy, Johanna, Hedy's parents, Lisa, and Francis. I thought that I will now be completely cut off from them, and that I will never see them again. It took me some time to see this was a special kind of war, affecting, at least for some time only Eastern Europe. The Germans had occupied within 4 weeks one half of Poland, at which time the Russians, to the astonishment of the whole world, invaded Poland from the East, occupied the other half of that country, and met the Germans in the area of Brest Litowsk, where they shook hands with the Germans.

At about that time my worries abated a little, when I received letters from Hedy from Vienna, and one of them made me especially happy, in which she wrote that she had received the American visa for herself and Johanna, and that she was now trying to get the tickets for a boat. So, it was a special kind of war, in which it was possible to send letters from Austria to Cuba, and in which it was possible to leave Vienna and to go on a voyage to the United States. It finally really happened that they got tickets for the boat "Rotterdam" and could go to Holland and leave for the United States.

From Lisa I had at that time also news that she had to leave Paris when the war started, that she could not get a permit to go to Le Touquet to join Francis, and that she had gone to Reims to friends of Lucy, Raymonds wife. She had to stay there for 2 or 3 months, till she finally succeeded in getting a permit, and could go to Le Touquet, where she had then with Francis, at least for a while, a relatively pleasant life.

I am inserting here a third letter, written by Francis on August 24th, 1939 in Le Touquet, which reads as follows:

"Dear Papa!

I strolled so much about that I could not write to you. I had started already 2 letters, but had never the time to finish them. I have one broken and one undamaged swallowtail, one has the antennae broken. 4 small foxes, 2 oakspinners, 1 damaged pigeontail, 2 butterflies, one like that and one like that (drawings), 1 damaged admiral, 1 thickhead, 1 fox, 1 painted lady, 1 Tagpfauenauge (verbally translated: Daypeacockeye), 1 vanessa-C, 1 small Waldportier (woods-porter), 2 blues, 1 small fritillary, and 3 others. Where do you get the pins and boxes from?

I hope you will buy for yourself a Rolls Royce. I had caught a caterpillar of a bear-spinner and it crawled away. Send me a few photos of you.

Many kisses Franzi."

The letter was written in August, shortly before the war had broken out and everything was still peaceful. He was busy with butterflies, had a good time on the seashore, while Lisa was still in Paris. A few days later, it was quite a different story

The great disappointment was that Francis did not get the American visa in France. The American consul in Vienna had told Hedy that he will send all the papers for Francis to the American consul in Paris, so that he could get the visa there. But the American consul in Paris was not willing to write the visa for Francis, gave as the excuse that there was not enough time to write it, although there would have been plenty of time. He said that the mother should leave without him and that Francis could follow her with another boat. When Hedy came to Amsterdam, she was, of course, terribly disappointed, that Francis was not there, did not know what had happened.

CHAPTER 23

HEDY AND JOHANNA ARRIVING IN THE U.S.A.

Anyway, I was happy to learn that Hedy and Johanna had left by boat from Rotterdam - it was on the 12th of December, 1939 - and that they had safely arrived in New York, 12 days later. I had written in the meantime to Hedy's cousin, Dr. Johanna Hilkowicz, and had asked her to rent a little apartment for them, and that she should put there in a vase a bunch of flowers. I also sent her a check of \$ 30.- to give to Hedy, so that she would have a little money right away. That was probably all I had at that time.

From then on, I was in constant contact with Hedy by mail. She had a little furnished apartment on West 89th Street near Central Park West.

The details of Hedy's life in Vienna after I had left, her departure, voyage, arrival in New York, and life afterwards are described by her ^{following page 305-} in an interview, which will be attached here, also interviews with Lisa, Francis, and Johanna. This will give a well rounded picture of their lives, seen from different angles. I also had the opportunity for an in-

interview with Lisl Ziegler, when she was in New York in November 1976, which will give an interesting description of her and Erich's experiences from the time they had left Vienna, each separately, got together in Brussels, where they got married, their voyage to Australia, and their life there with their family. Also an interview with my brother Walter, in which he described the situation of my family in Czernowitz, his departure to Argentina in 1938, his life there, his marriage with Fanny, their struggle there together with their son Hugo, and finally their arrival in the United States, about 10 years ago, and their life here since then. All that should provide interesting reading and detailed information about my family, and make it easier for me to continue with my own story.

When the war had started, I had another worry, the liftvan, which was in Hamburg. I wanted to save it, get it out from there. I wrote to the forwarding agent, the company Leinkauf in Vienna, and asked them to have the liftvan moved by rail from Hamburg to Trieste in Italy, and to use the money, which I had paid them for the transportation by sea from Hamburg to New York for the moving of the liftvan by rail. That was done in a relatively short time, and I was notified that the liftvan had arrived in Trieste.

It should be mentioned here that Hedy's parents had stayed in their apartment, after Hedy and Johanna had left, for a while longer. But afterwards they had to move. They got an apartment in Hollandstrasse 9, also in the 2nd district. It happened to be a relatively nice apartment. In the same house lived two relatives, my father-in-law's sister Klementine Husserl, called Klemi, and a sister-in-law Rosa Ziegler, widow



Grandmother Gina with Johanna. The last picture of Johanna taken in Vienna.

of Jakob Ziegler, with her daughter Hilda. They had sent us pictures, showing them sitting peacefully together, drinking coffee, also one with aunt Klemi and aunt Elsa Ziegler, widow of Siegmund Ziegler, mother of Trude, Klara, Emmy, and Walter.

After the occupation of Poland by Germany and Russia there seemed to be a lull in the war. It was a formidable task for the Germans to digest the territory and organize themselves in Poland. In the meantime, on November 30th, the Russian army attacked Finland, opening the Russo-Finnish war. The Finnish army put up a strong defense, but after a few months of varying success the Russians succeeded in breaking through the Mannerheim Line. A peace agreement, negotiated in Moscow, meant for Finland the loss of big chunks of territory in the East, including the city of Viborg and far in the North the port of Petsamo and adjacent territory.

Then, on April 9th, 1940, Germany occupied Denmark, which did not offer any resistance, and at the same time invaded Norway. In Norway there was resistance, but after a few weeks the whole country was occupied. King Haakon VII. and his cabinet had escaped to London. Before the occupation of Norway was completed, the German army on May 10th, without warning, invaded Holland, Belgium, and Luxembourg.

On that same day, Winston Churchill replaced Neville Chamberlain as British prime minister. The French and British governments dispatched expeditionary forces into Belgium to cooperate with the Belgian army in its resistance. On May 12th the German army crossed the Meuse at Sedan. On May 12th Rotterdam surrendered to the Germans, after part of the city had been destroyed by an exterminating air attack. Queen Wilhelmina

and her government escaped to London and the Netherlands army capitulated on May 14th. German mechanized divisions drove deep into Northern France, racing to the English Channel at Abbeville, thereby cutting off the northern part of France, and thus separating the British and Belgian forces from the main French armies. The Belgian armies had to fall back upon Ostende and Dunkerque, and King Leopold III. on May 26th ordered them to capitulate. The British expeditionary force of some 250,000 men had to be withdrawn by sea, chiefly from the beaches of Dunkerque. About 215,000 British and 120,000 French troops were rescued by heroic efforts, but had to abandon almost all equipment.

This was happening while Lisa and Francis were in that same area, which was cut off from the rest of France. Their experience at that time is vividly described in interviews by Lisa and Francis. I, in Cuba, and Hedy, in New York, went through days of agony when learning the news. I remember that I had looked anxiously at the map of France, had foreseen the disaster and had hoped that they were able to escape in time to Abbeville, which was only about 30 miles from Le Touquet. But no, they had left too late; when the bridge over the Somme river was already destroyed, and the Germans had already advanced along the coast towards Boulogne, passing through Le Touquet. For months afterwards we were cut off from them and did not know, whether they were still alive. Later we had found out through Hedy's parents in Vienna that they had received mail from them and that they were O.K.

Hedy had hard times in New York, had to work to earn a living and to take care of her little girl and her little

household. And all the time, since she had arrived in New York, she had tried to get an affidavit for her parents in Vienna. One man, a Mr. Max Bruell, very wealthy, a brother of Hedy's cousin Samuel Bruell, had promised her an affidavit, but in the end reneged, and she had to start again to find somebody. A young woman, a physician, Dr. Runes, had promised Hedy's parents in Vienna that her relatives would send them an affidavit from New York. She needed money for the ticket for the boat, and Hedy's parents helped her by lending her the money. Hedy had a difficult time with that Dr. Runes in New York. She could seldom reach her by phone, and she finally told her that the affidavit was sent to the American consulate in Vienna. But it was never confirmed by Hedy's parents, and Hedy had to assume that it was never sent. Only recently, after 35 years, copies of documents, which Hedy's parents had left behind in Poland, were sent to us, and among them was a letter from the American consulate, which showed that the relatives of Dr. Runes had really made out and sent the affidavit to the consulate in the summer of 1940. But it was written in such a way that the consulate could not be sure that they would really help them, if they would come to the United States, and wanted additional reassurance from the people, who had written the affidavit. To get an additional letter from these people was apparently not possible. Hedy's parents had asked Marianne Erdstein to intervene with Dr. Runes, but these people were not willing to do anything, and on account of that two wonderful people lost their lives. Why Hedy's parents never wrote Hedy or me about it, is difficult to understand. It could be that they did it and that the letter got lost.

As I saw that Hedy was unsuccessful in finding somebody, who would be willing to write an affidavit for her parents, I urged her to leave New York and join me in Cuba. I had become very impatient, had also spoken with her by telephone, and she finally gave in.

Hannele!

Erinnerst Du Dich an den Papa noch?
Er hielt Dich oft am Arm doch,
Er spielte mit Dir, Du warst so brav,
Er sang Dir sanfte Lieder zum Schlaf.

Nun ist es lang her, dass er fuhr fort
Mit dem Franzi und Euch allein liess dort.
Gern wär er geblieben, er liebte Euch sehr,
Er musste fort über's weite Meer.

Nun bist auch Du über's Meer gekommen.
Ich freute mich sehr, als ich dies vernommen
Und damit Du nicht glaubst, ich hab' Dich vergessen,
Schick' ich Dir nun was Gutes zum Essen.

This little poem I sent to Johanna shortly after her arrival in New York

Here is a translation into English:

Hannele!

Do you still remember your Papa?
He held you often on his arm,
He played with you, you were so good,
He sang soft songs for you for your sleep.

Now it is a long time that he had left
With Francis and left you behind.
He would have preferred to stay with you,
He loved you very much. He had to leave
Over the wide ocean.

Now you have also come over the sea,
I was very glad when I heard about it
And that you don't think I had forgotten you
I am sending you something good to eat.

The following pages show copies of pictures of a book which I had made for Johanna, when she was a little over 3 years old and had just arrived with Hedy in New York. I was very happy and excited, while they were on the boat, and wanted to send her that picture-book, had worked on it for weeks, had made about one picture every day, had used India ink with a very fine pen for the drawings and the writing of the little verses, and at the end made the covers and bound the pages with needle and thread. It arrived in New York just in time after they had arrived, and Hedy wrote ^{Johanna} that ~~she~~ liked the book very much and was especially interested in the little objects, which I had drawn and had pasted on the inside of the covers. Hedy brought then the book, when she came to join me in Havana, and since then it was much admired by young and old. I had two copies made and had given one of them to Francis and the other one to Johanna, and I have the original.

I have now again copies made for insertion in this biography, to add a high point to my biography, cause some smiles or laughter for a change, since most of my narration is about serious things.

Unfortunately, my prediction that we all will get together after the war was too optimistic, as our poor parents were not saved and could not join us.

I have translated the little verses from German into English, as well as I could. At that time we called our children Franzi or Franzerl and Hannerl or Hanni.

The binding of the book was not very good and Hedy fixed it, since she was very good in bookbinding, which she had learned in Vienna, and she bound the book in leather.

Correction: I had made a third copy of that book and had sent it years back to Erich and Liesel in Australia, and the response was very enthusiastic.



FRANZI and HANNERL
 Two good children.
 A true story, which is very sad
 but has a good end.



Den Doktor Mechner sieht man da
 Und neben ihm steht die Mama
 Und Franz, das liebe Bubelein
 Und Hannerl auch, die ist noch klein.

The doctor Mechner one sees here
 And the Mama, she stands near,
 And Franz, the dear little son,
 And sweet Hannerl, the youngest one.



Zur Schule schon der Franzl geht,
 Lernt 1, 2, 3 und A, B, C.
 Er muss schon laufen, es ist spät.
 Die Hannerl ruft ihm nach "Adieu".

And off to school goes little Franz
 Learns 1, 2, 3, and A, B, C,
 He has to run, it is getting late
 And Hannerl calls after 'Adieu'.



Papa und Franzi sitzen hier
 Und spielen schön auf dem Klavier.
 Die Hannerl hört das gar zugern
 Und denkt: Ob ich das auch mal lern?

Papa and Francis are sitting here,
 Playing the piano, it is clear,
 Hannerl listens and she wonders
 If someday she will learn to play.



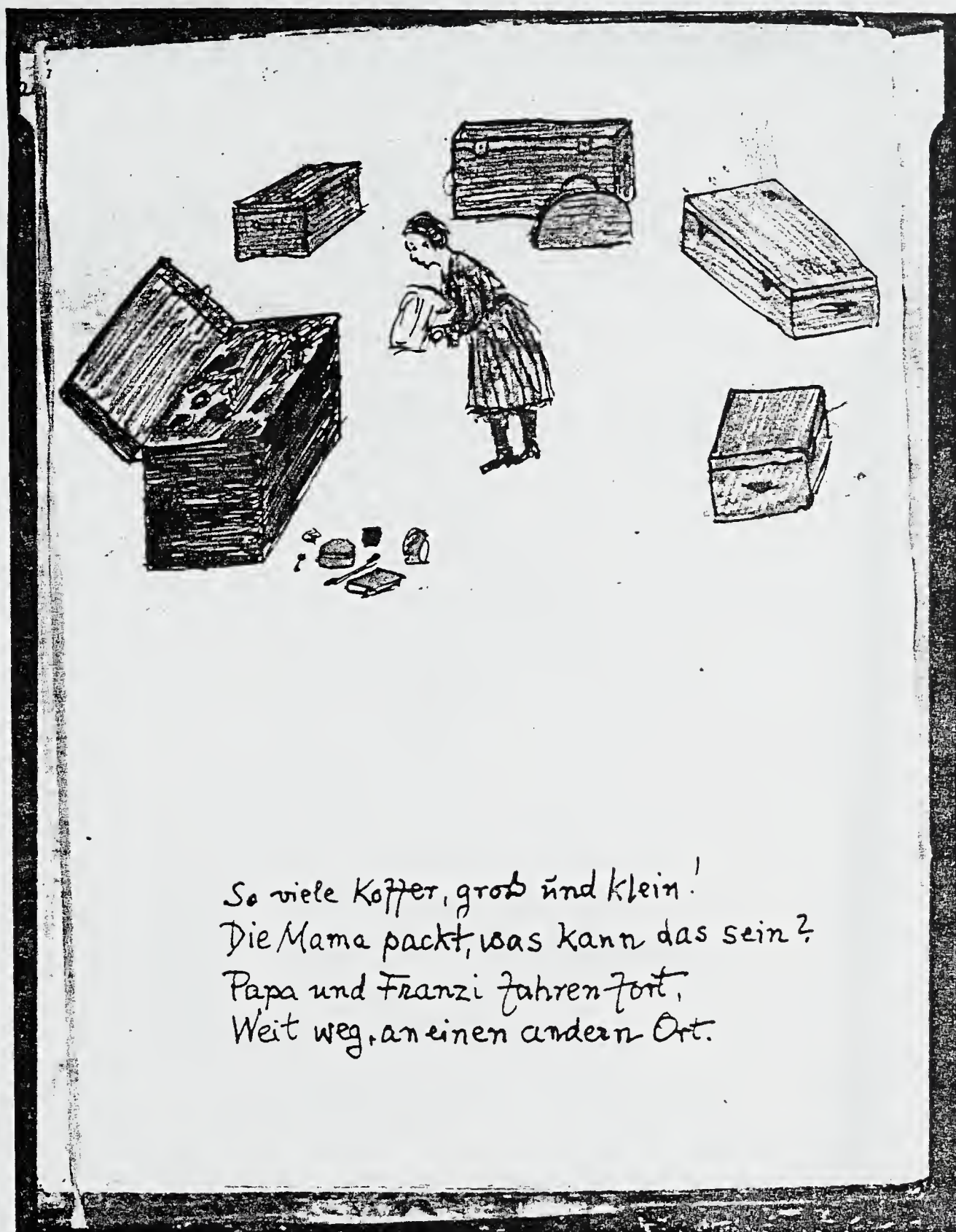
Hier sitzen alle schön bei Tisch,
 Die Mitzi kommt gerade herein,
 Sie essen Suppe, Reis und Fisch..
 Die Hannerl sagt: „Das schmeckt mir fein“.

Here all are at the table together,
 Mitzi is bringing in the platter,
 They are eating soup and fish and rice
 And Hannerl says: 'Humm that is nice'.



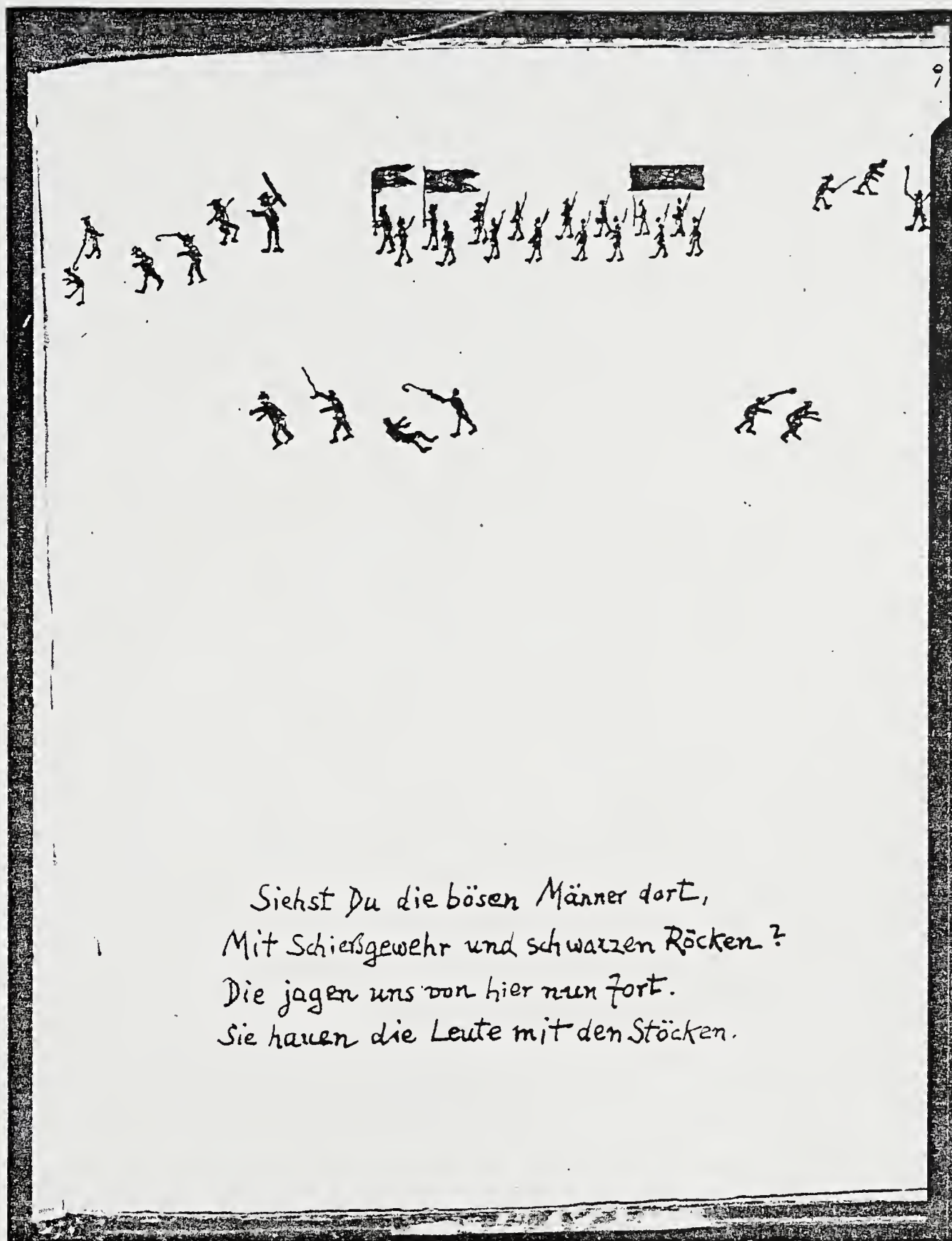
Die Tiere liebt die Hanni sehr
 Und spielt mit ihnen gar zu gern,
 Mit Haserl, Wolf, Elefant und Bär
 Mit Hund und Hahn, dem stolzen Herrn.

All these animals Hanni does love,
 Especially those that you see above,
 The rabbit, the wolf, the elephant and bear
 The dog and the chimpanzee she treats with care



So viele Koffer, groß und klein!
 Die Mama packt, was kann das sein?
 Papa und Franzi fahren fort,
 Weit weg, an einen andern Ort.

So many trunks, large and small,
 Mama is packing. What could it be?
 Papa and Francis are leaving them all
 For another place across the sea.



Siehst Du die bösen Männer dort,
 Mit Schießgewehr und schwarzen Röcken?
 Die jagen uns von hier nun fort.
 Sie hauen die Leute mit den Stöcken.

Do you see those bad men there,
 With rifles and black coats?
 They are chasing us away from here
 They hit the people with the sticks.



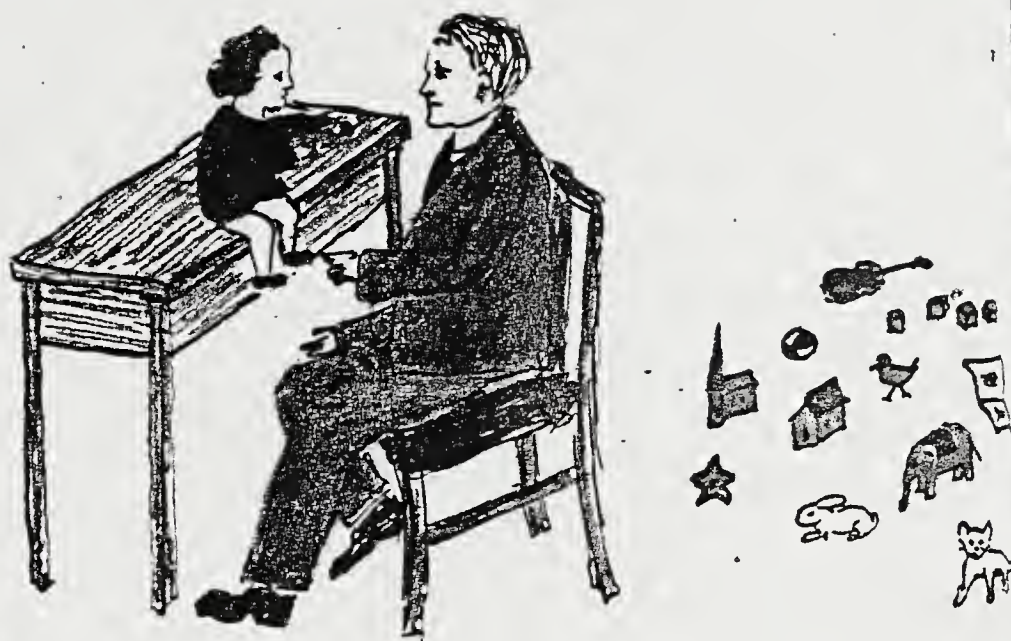
Der Bursch hat zwei Revolver gar,
Ist wie der Teufel wild und schreit.
Er schießt sehr schnell, er ist ein Narr.
Wir fahren weg und zwar noch heut.

That guy has even two revolvers,
He is wild like the devil and shouts,
He shoots very fast, he is crazy.
We have to leave, and even today.



Der Franzi bringt sein Netz daher
 Zum Schmetterlingefangen.
 „Das leg' in den Koffer, bitte sehr,
 Mitsamt dem Stock, dem langen.“

Franzi brings his net
 For catching of butterflies.
 "Please put that in the trunk too
 with the long stick."



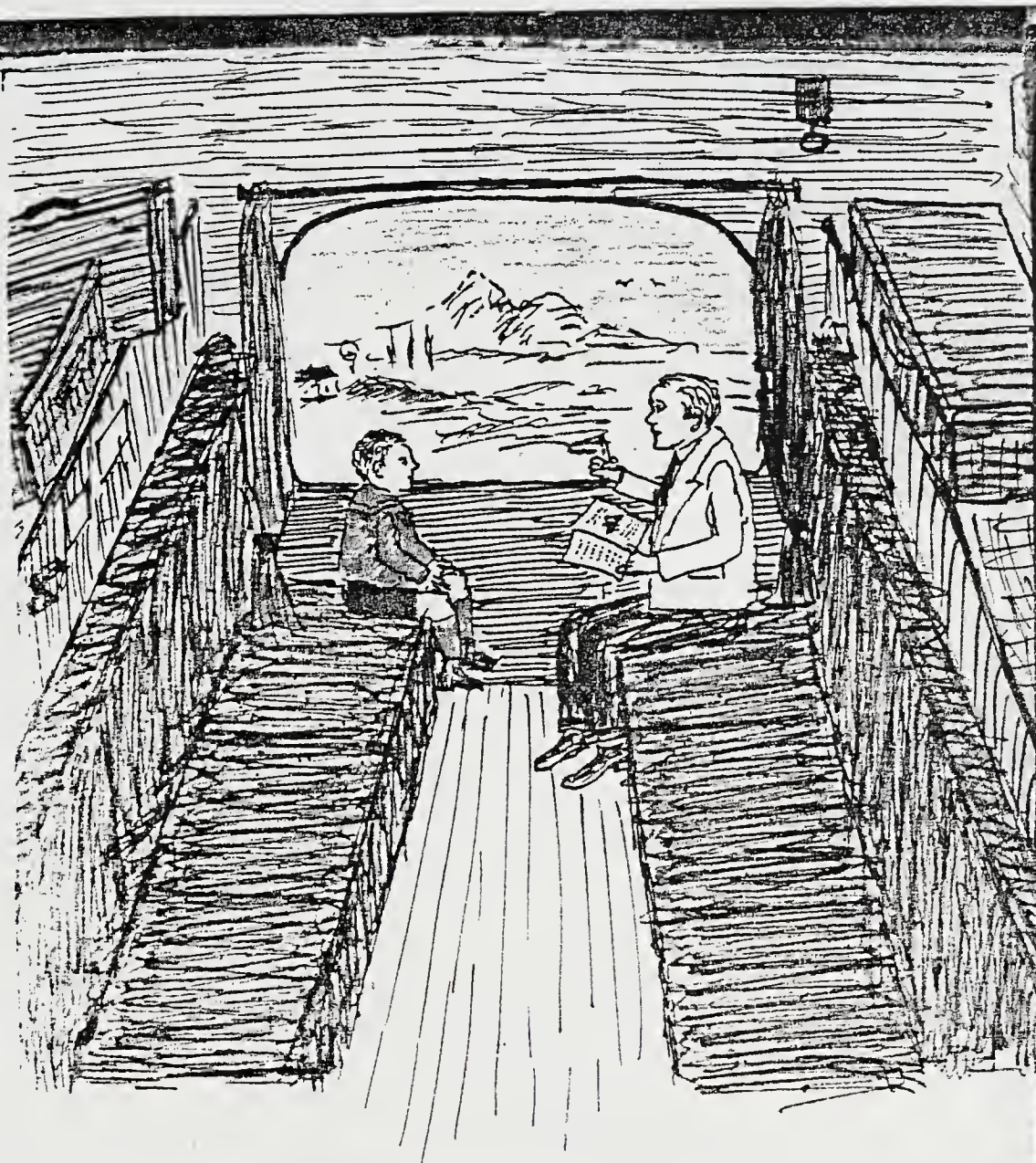
„Ach lieber Papa, bleib' doch hier
 Und spiele schöne Spiele mit mir“
 Sagt Hannerl. — Doch der Papa: „Nein!
 Mein süßes Kind, das kann nicht sein.“

"Oh, dear Papa, stay here, and play
 nice games with me".
 Says Hannerl. But Papa, "No, my sweet child,
 That can not be."



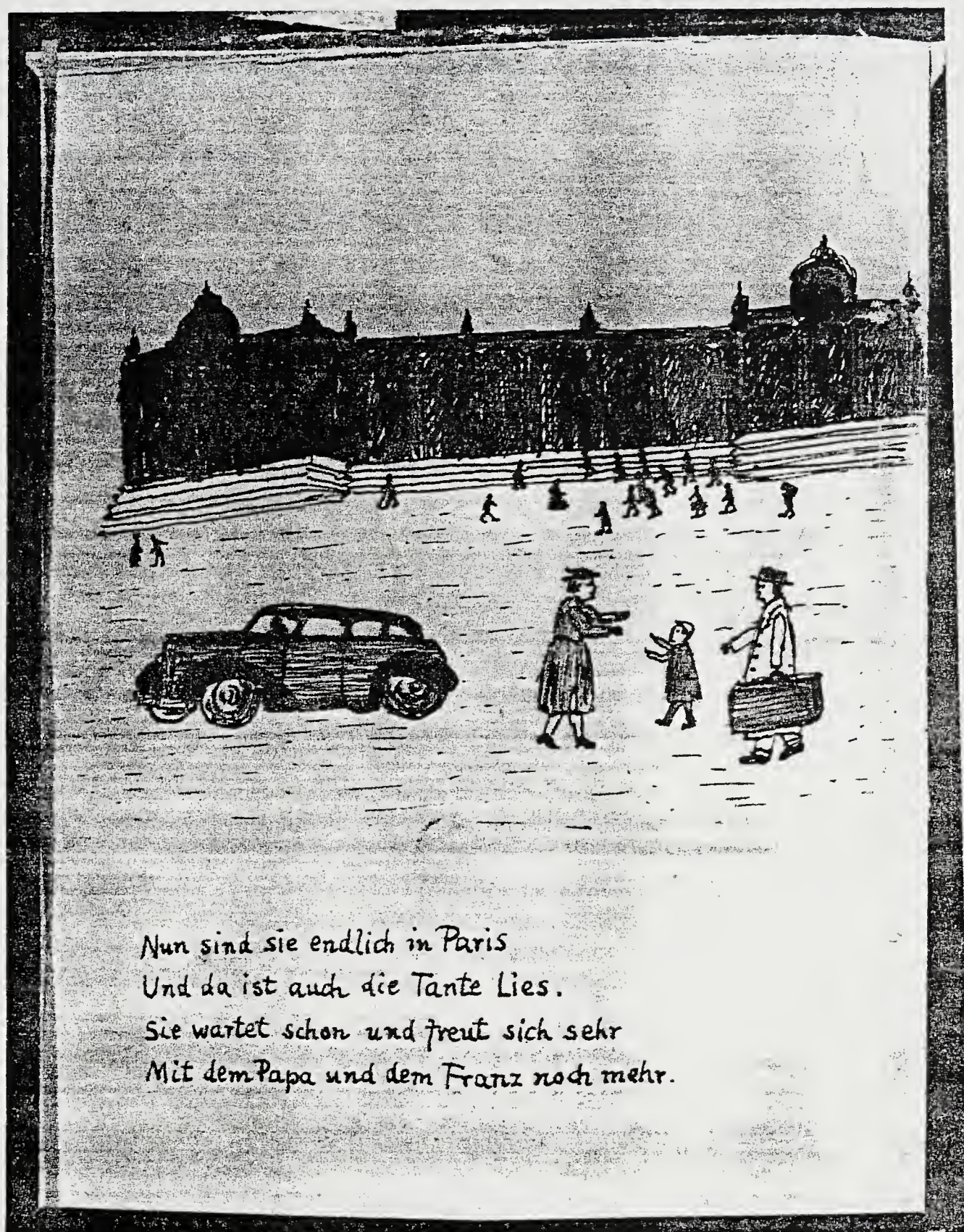
Sie weinen sehr und stehenda,
 Die Mama, Hannerl, Großmama,
 Der Großpapa, die Klemi-Tant'.
 Das Auto fährt. „Grüß Euch Gott, mitanand!“

They are crying and standing there,
 Mama, Hannerl, the Grandmama,
 The Grandpapa and aunt Klemi.
 The auto leaves. God bless all of you.



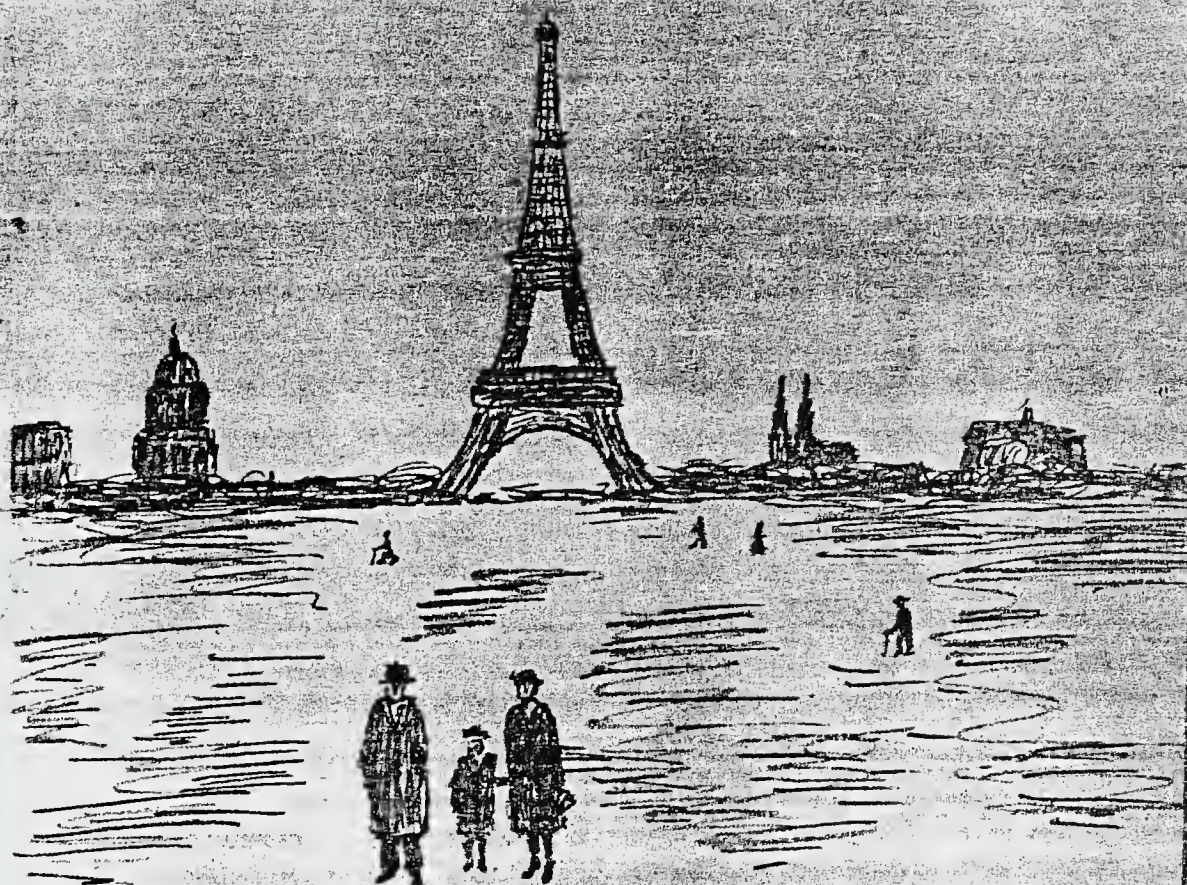
In der Eisenbahn ist's schön,
 Die Fahrt ist lang, Paris ist weit,
 Beim Fenster gibt es viel zu sehen.
 Papa liest vor, der Franzi ist gescheit.

In the railroad car it's nice.
 The ride is long, Paris is far.
 At the window there is much to be seen.
 Papa is reading, Franzi is smart.



Nun sind sie endlich in Paris
 Und da ist auch die Tante Lies.
 Sie wartet schon und freut sich sehr
 Mit dem Papa und dem Franz noch mehr.

Now they are finally in Paris
 And there is also aunt Lisa.
 She was waiting already and is very happy
 With Papa and still more with Franzi.



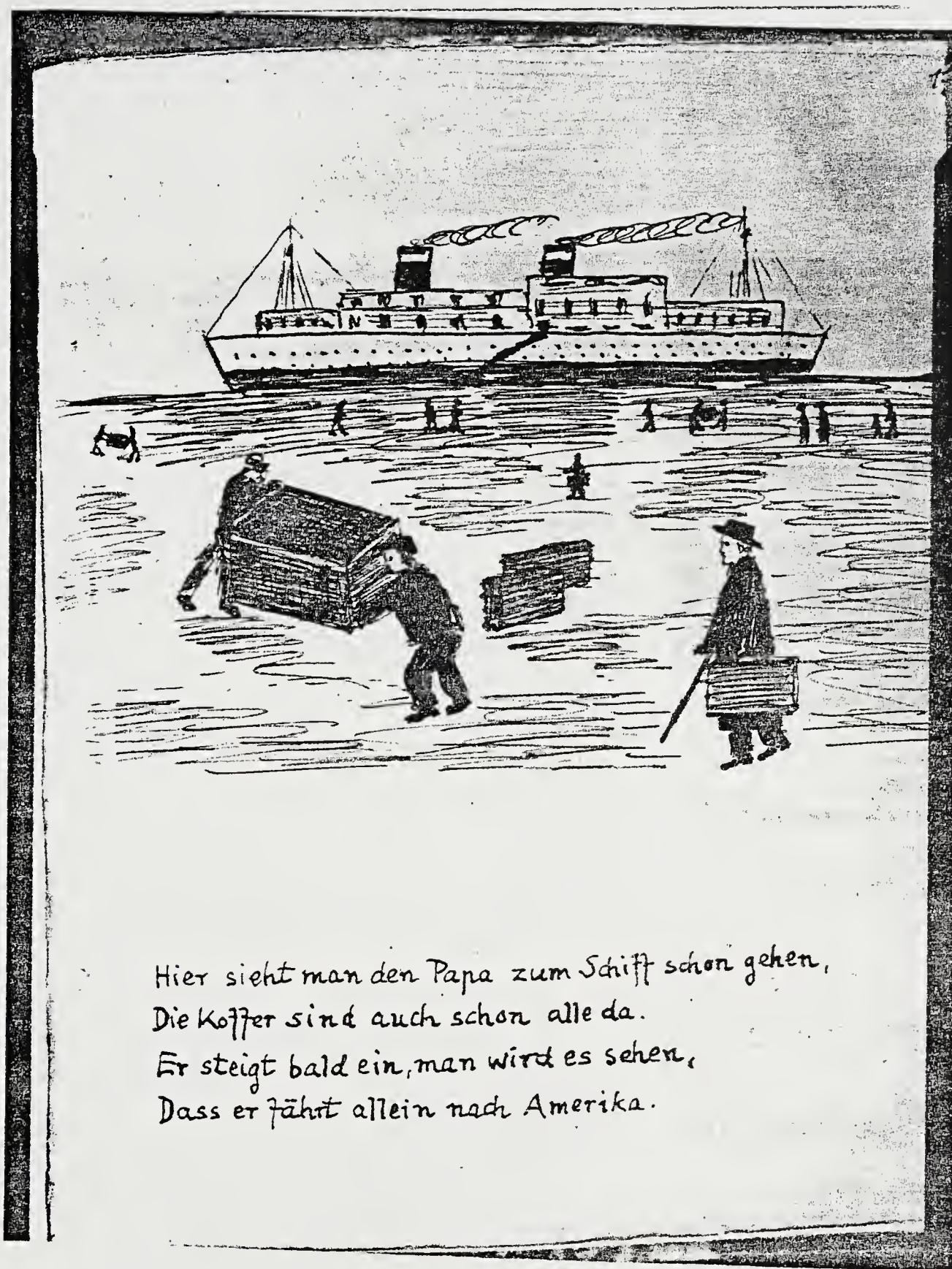
Paris ist eine schöne Stadt.
 Die schöne Häuser und Kirchen hat.
 Der Eiffelturm ist riesig hoch,
 Franzi war schon oben, möchte ein zweites Mal noch.

Paris is a beautiful city,
 Has beautiful houses and churches.
 The Eiffeltower is very high;
 Franzi was already up there, would like
 to go up again.



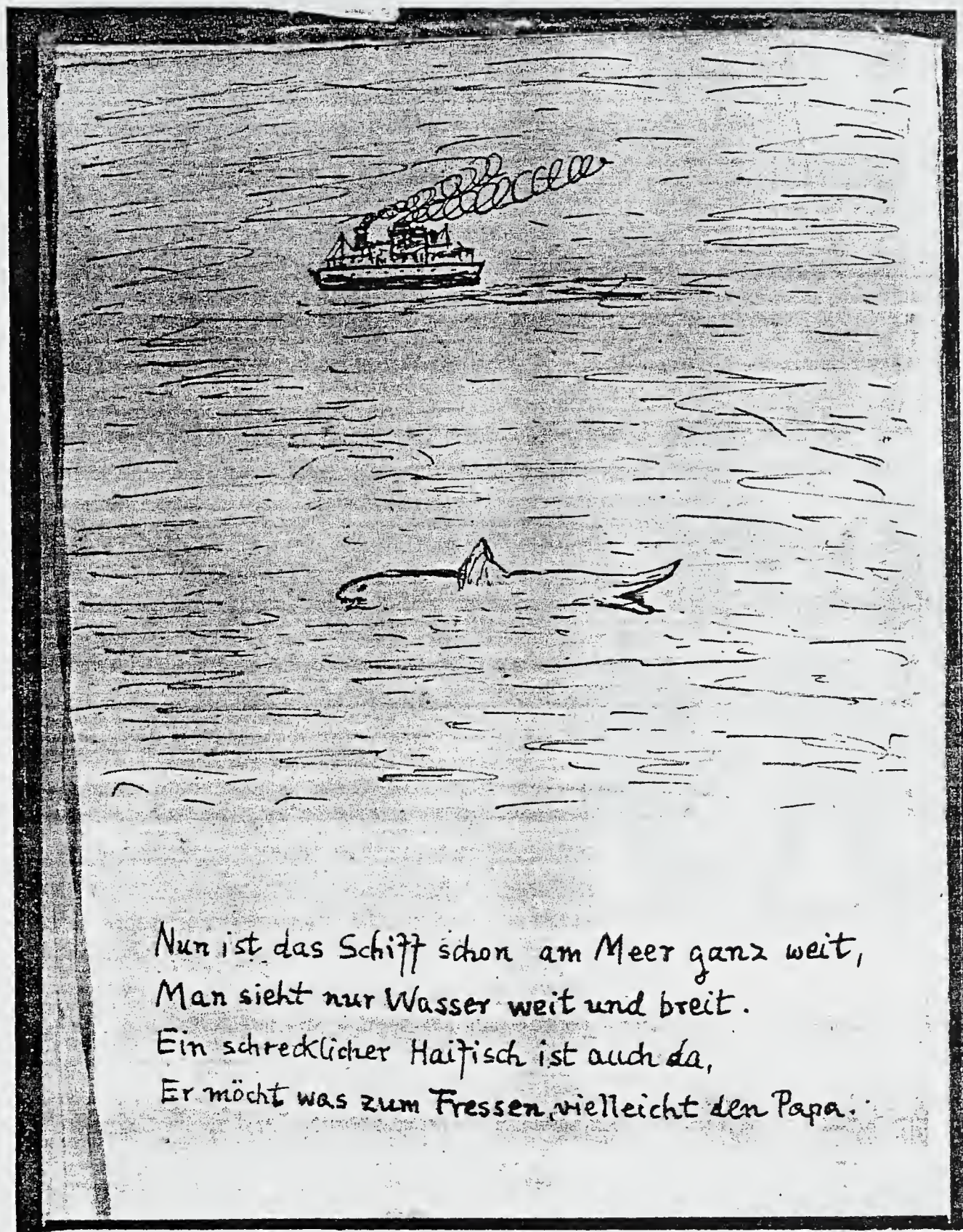
Nun fährt der Papa wieder fort,
 Franz und Tant' Lisa bleiben allein.
 Sie winken noch, im Zug ist er dort,
 Er muss zum Schiff, es kann anders nicht sein.

Papa is now leaving again
 Franz and aunt Lisa are left alone.
 They still beckon, he is there in the train,
 He has to go to the boat, it can not be different.



Hier sieht man den Papa zum Schiff schon gehen,
 Die Koffer sind auch schon alle da.
 Er steigt bald ein, man wird es sehen,
 Dass er fährt allein nach Amerika.

Here one can see Papa going to the boat.
 The trunks are also here already.
 He will soon board the boat; one will see
 That he is going alone to America.

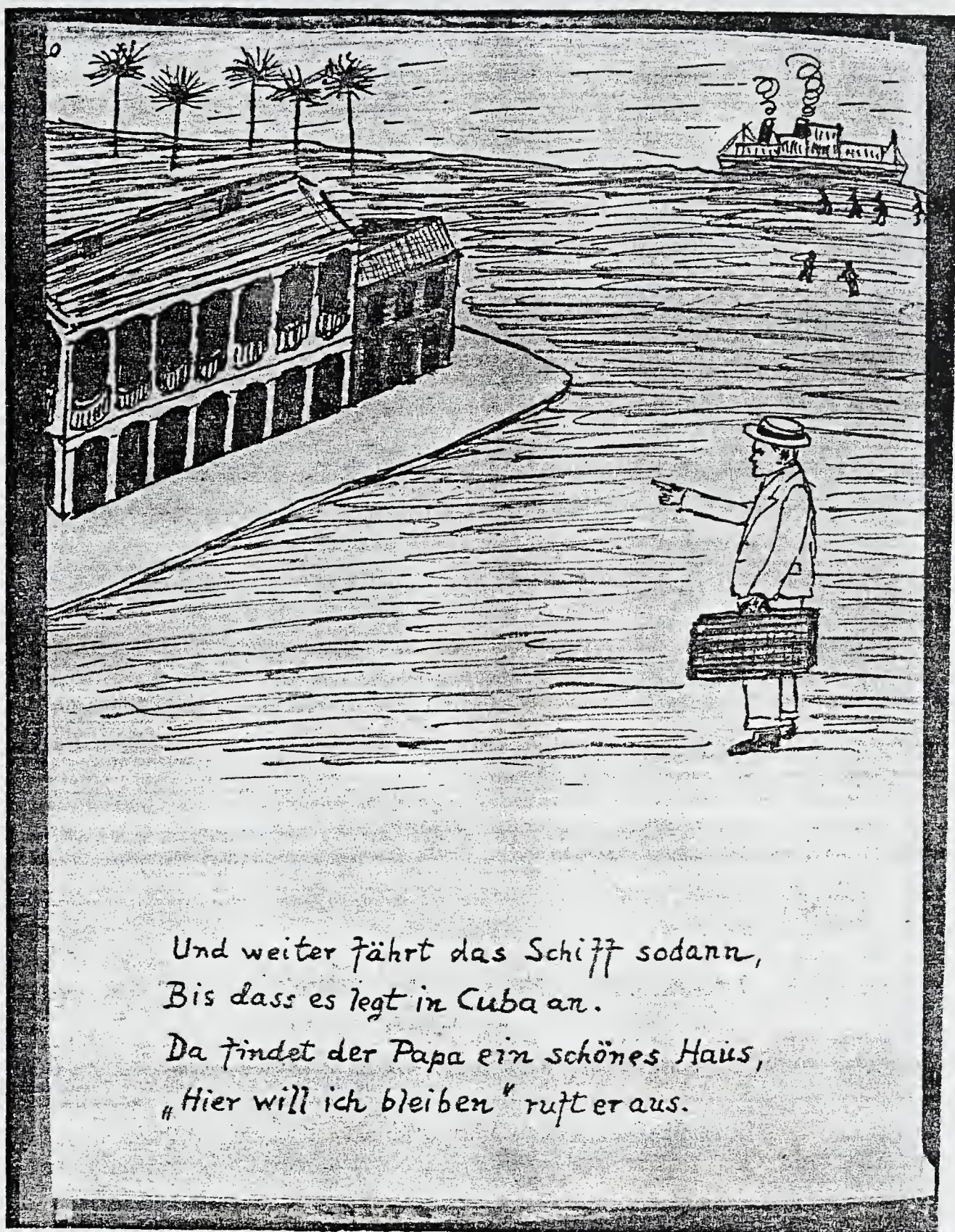


Nun ist das Schiff schon am Meer ganz weit,
 Man sieht nur Wasser weit und breit.
 Ein schrecklicher Haifisch ist auch da,
 Er möchte was zum Fressen, vielleicht den Papa.

The boat is now far out in the ocean,
 One can only see water, wherever one looks.
 A terrible shark is there also,
 He wants something to eat, perhaps Papa.



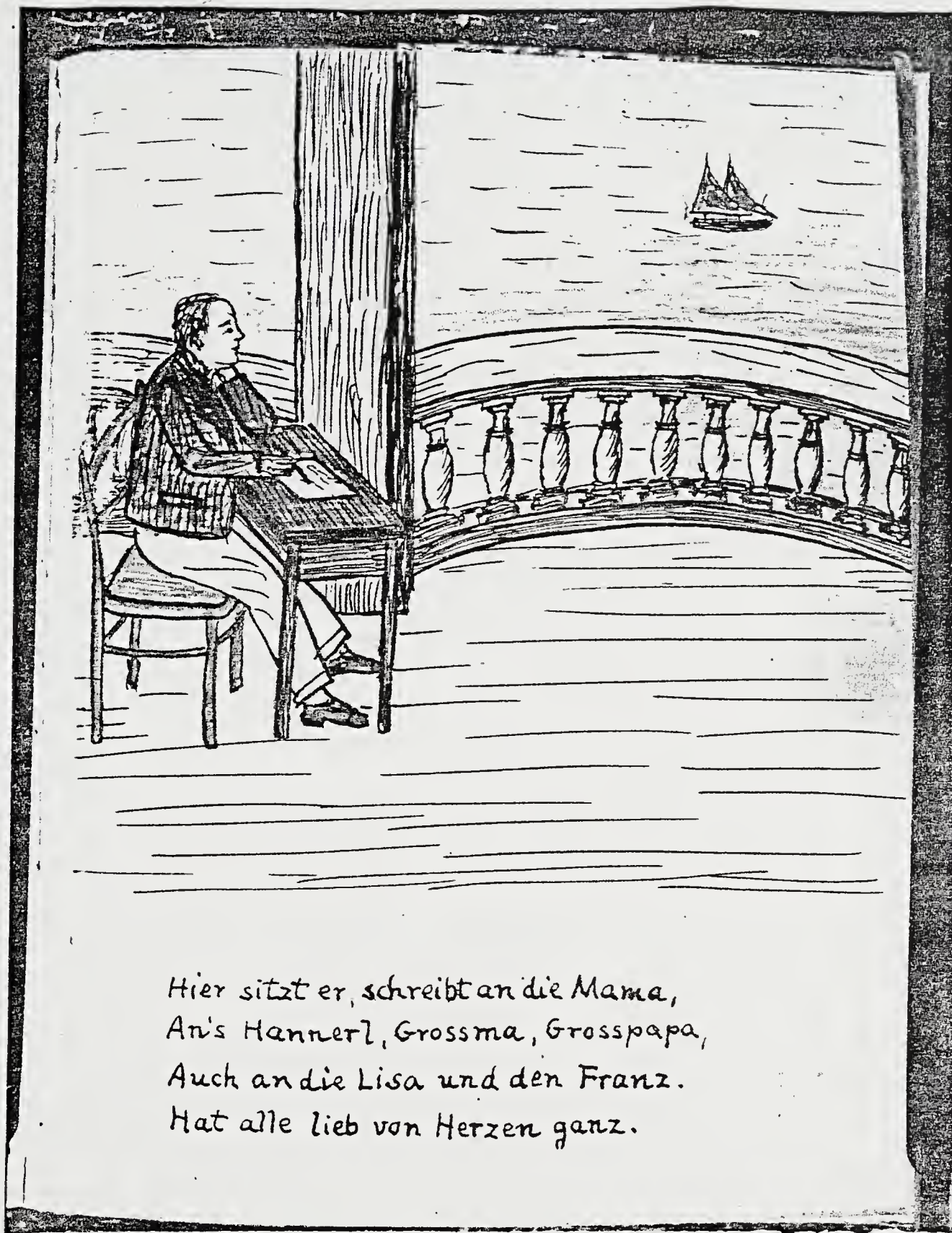
The boat comes to a faraway country,
 Where there are only black people.
 That they are good dancers is well known.
 Papa looks on, he is not afraid.



Und weiter fährt das Schiff sodann,
Bis dass es legt in Cuba an.

Da findet der Papa ein schönes Haus,
„Hier will ich bleiben“ ruft er aus.

And the boat goes further
Till it lands in Cuba.
There Papa finds a beautiful house.
"Here I want to stay", he calls out.



Hier sitzt er, schreibt an die Mama,
 An's Hannerl, Grossma, Grosspapa,
 Auch an die Lisa und den Franz.
 Hat alle lieb von Herzen ganz.

He is sitting here, writes to Mama,
 To Hannerl, Grandma, and Grandpapa.
 Also to Lisa and Franz.
 Loves all of them with all his heart.

2



Der Brief fährt zu der Mama dann,
 Mit Flugzeug, Schiff und Eisenbahn.
 Die Mama liest vor und Hannerl passt auf
 Und beide sind sehr traurig darauf.

The letter travels then to Mama,
 With airplane, boat, and railway.
 Mama reads it to Hannerl and she is attentive,
 And both are then very sad.



Dann liest einen Brief vor der Grosspapa
 Von Lisa und Franz. - Und die Grossmama
 Hält einen Brief in der Hand,
 Von Erich und Liesel aus fernem Land.

The Grandpapa reads a letter .
 From Lisa and Franz. And Grandmama
 is holding a letter in her hand
 From Erich and Liesel from a far-away land.



So führen sie weg nach allen Seiten,
 Erst Lisa, dann Erich und Liesel beizeiten,
 Dann Papa und Franz und es kommen sodann,
 Auch die Mama und die Hannerl daran.

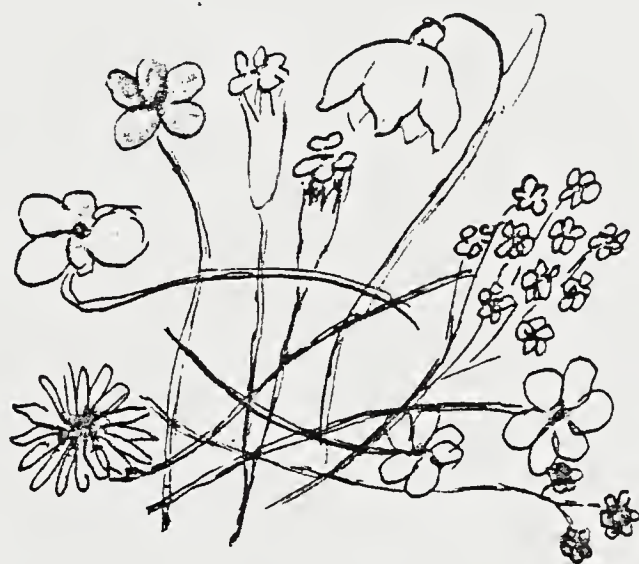
Thus they all had left in different directions;
 First Lisa, then Erich and Liesel betimes,
 Then Papa and Franzis, and then follow also
 Mama and Hannerl.



Bald kommen auch die Grossmama
 Und der Grosspapa an die Reih.
 Wir sitzen dann wieder beisammen ganz nah,
 Das wird eine Freud, juchhei.

Und ist der Krieg zu End,
 Dann reichen wir uns die Händ
 Und fahren alle nach Haus.
 Die Geschichte ist aus.

Soon Grandmama and Grandpapa
 Will also follow. We will sit then
 Together very close.
 That will be a delight, juchhei.
 And when the war will end,
 We will grasp each others hands,
 And will all go home.
 That is the end of the story.



40 YEARS LATER:

But no! Unfortunately!

That did not happen.

Dr Ziegler and Gina

were taken one night

By two S.S. men,

Bad, bad people in

Black uniforms to a

Schoolbuilding with many

Other good people from Vienna.

Then they all were taken

To a train and pushed

Into wagons, which were

For cattle. The train filled

With people, good people,

Like your grandparents.

There were no seats, they had

To sit or lie on the floor,

No food, no water. For air

One little window below the roof.

The doors locked from outside.

over →

Thus they travelled for 2 days.
Till they arrived in Poland and
Could get out. They found
A little room in a small house.
They wrote to us often, prayed
For all of us. They still hoped
They will one day see us again.

They lived in Poland one and
A half years. Then one day
On October 11th 1942, they were
Taken to a camp* and that
Was the end. They were locked
In a room and had to breathe
Poisonous gas and died. Two
Wonderful people. He 82, she
63 years old. German biests
Killed this way 6 million Jews.
Remember it as long as you live
And tell it to your children.

* Camp Majdanek (near Lublin)

CHAPTER 24

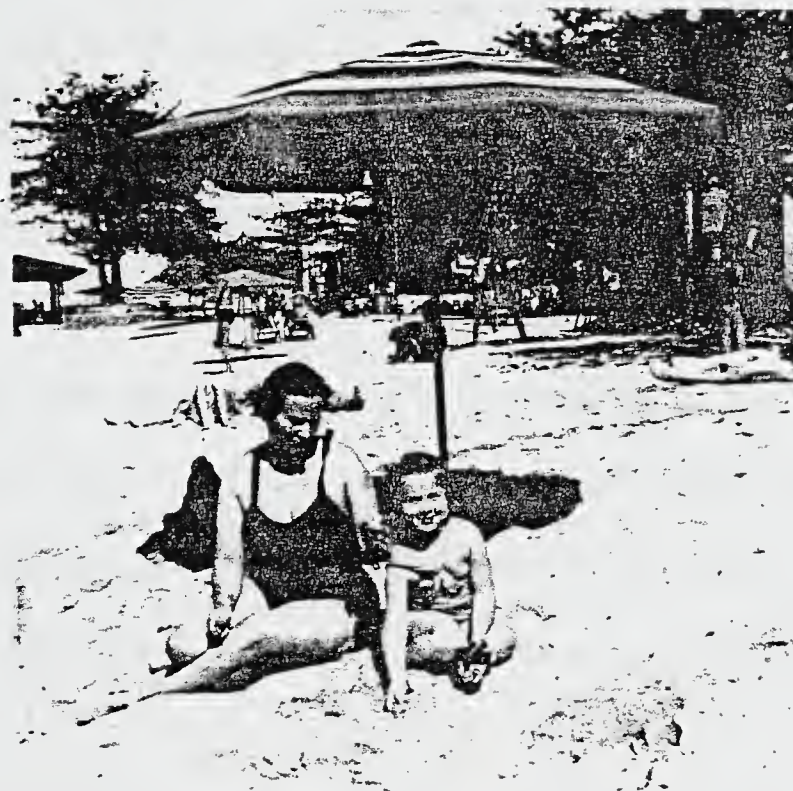
HEDY'S AND JOHANNA'S ARRIVAL IN HAVANA.

Hedy and Johanna had to take a train to Miami and there a boat to Havana, where they arrived on October 1st, 1940. Unnecessary to say that I was extremely happy to see them again after 2 years. Johanna did not recognize me, of course. She was 2 years old, when I had left Vienna, and now she was 4 years old. She was holding on to her mammy and looked at me. When Hedy told her that I am her Papi, she did not seem to believe it. I lived then still in the same place on the Malecon, and they both moved in into the same room, which I had there. It was not too bad, since we had the whole floor and the big terrace to move about, and also the meals there. And we went out for walks in the streets quite often. Johanna and I became good friends soon, and more, fell in love with each other. In the street, she easily became tired, and I had to carry her on my arm or on my shoulders quite a lot.

I will now continue with the description of the war situation in France. The German troops did not lose much time. While still engaged in the part of Northern France, which was cut off from the rest of France, eliminating English troops, which were covering the embarkation of the British and French forces, the main German forces streamed into France in all directions from an arc between Abbeville and Sedan. On June 14th the Germans entered Paris. A few days before, on June 10th, Italy declared war on France and Great Britain and Italian

forces invaded Southern France. On June 15th the French fortress of Verdun was captured. On the Baltic, Russian forces moved at that time into Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, provinces, which had gained autonomy after the Russian revolution. Now they were swallowed up by Russia again. And another province, Bessarabia, which Russia had lost to Rumania at that time also, was taken over by Russia together with the northern Part of Bukowina, including the capital Czernowitz. The Russians demanded it and the Rumanians had to do what they were told, and on June 28th, Russian troops occupied that territory. My people in Czernowitz had to live now under the Communists. So, after all, it was not as bad as it seemed, when our house was sold and torn down, and three apartments sold. At least a small part was rescued in that transaction. Later, the Communists would have confiscated everything anyway. The Rumanians lost also, under pressure from Berlin and Rome, a large area of Transylvania, which was taken over by Hungary. These reverses caused a political overturn in Rumania. General Antonescu became premier and King Carol fled from Rumania and was replaced by his son as Michael V.

On June 16th, Marshal Henri-Philippe Petain replaced Paul Renaud as head of the French government, and asked the Germans for an armistice. It was signed on June 22nd at Compiene. It provided that the French forces were to be disarmed and that three-fifth of France be surrendered to German control. On June 24th, an armistice was concluded between France and Italy. On July 5th, the French government at Vichy severed relations with the British government, after the British had sunk French battleships, which refused surrender, among them



the Dunkerque (26.000 tons), the Provence (22.000 tons), the Bretagne (22.000 tons), and an aircraft carrier (10.000 tons). After the fall of France, the Germans intensified their bombardment of England, by blasting the airports and vital industries with over 1000 German airplanes. The British responded with heavy raids on Berlin, Duesseldorf, Essen, and other German cities. England had already received before large supplies of war material from the United States. Later 50 American destroyers were transferred to Britain to combat the air and submarine menace. Intensified bombing of London was retaliated by the British by bombing continental ports, including Antwerp, Ostende, Calais, and Dunkerque to frustrate German invasion preparations. Improving British defense measures inflicted heavy losses on German air raiders, 185 invading planes crashing in one day. In a supreme effort at crushing British industrial resources and demoralizing the population, the Germans blasted the industrial city of Coventry with destructive effect. Thereafter the air attacks became more sporadic.

The British had survived the worst of the aerial Blitzkrieg. German losses in aircraft had been heavy. An official estimate placed them 2375 German to 800 British planes destroyed in the period August 8 to October 31. 14.000 civilians had been killed in London alone. British losses at sea had also been heavy. German air attacks on Britain resumed after May 1941 with shattering result on London. One home in every five was damaged or destroyed, factories shattered, and transport, gas, and water systems disrupted. The Battle of Britain subsided with the opening of the Russian front in June 1941.

But the German submarine blockade remained a grave menace to British supply services throughout 1941 and 1942.

The description of the course of the war was necessary for the understanding of the situation, in which Lisa and Francis were at that time in France and Hedy's parents in Austria. Further developments in the war will from now on only be mentioned occasionally, since they are well known or can easily be found in history books and, anyway, do not belong and should not be included in this family biography.

As to Lisa's and Francis' whereabouts, all we knew for a long time was that they were in Le Touquet and well. What we did not know and found out later was that they had to move from there, as they were in danger of being registered as foreigners and perhaps sent away by the Germans. They had the good luck to know a rich man, Mr. Roi, who had two Polish girls as servants, who were also in danger, and the next day they all moved in two cars to the Bernerie, a little village on the Atlantic coast, where this man had a few houses and where they could live more or less in peace for a few months. Then, one day, there was a similar situation as before, when they were in danger and Lisa and Francis took off by train for Paris. There Lisa was successful in getting the permission to move to the unoccupied zone of France, vividly described by her in the interview, and they settled in Vichy, where they endured a very cold winter and lived in precarious conditions. Francis got there very sick with measles.

At about that time, something very interesting happened in Havana. A friend of mine, Dr. Besner, met me in the street and told me that he had received a letter from a friend, Paul

Rosegg, from France, in which he asked him, whether he knows me, who was the brother-in-law of Miss Lisa Ziegler, who is somewhere in France, and whose whereabouts he would like to find out. Paul Rosegg was my schoolmate in Czernowitz, about 26 years before, but I had only a faint remembrance of him. Anyway, I wrote to my inlaws in Vienna about it, gave them the address of Paul Rosegg, and since they had Lisa's address in France, they wrote her about it and gave her Paul's address. This seemed to have been the way Lisa could get in contact with Paul, who was at that time in Nice. It did not take long that Lisa and Francis also moved to Nice and that they found Paul there. From then on, we got also in contact with them in Nice.

I have to insert here a story, not told yet, interesting to my children and grandchildren. I had in my room on the Malecon in Havana for a long time a pet, a white mouse, which I kept in a bird cage. I needed a companion, being alone in my room for two years. It was a very special mouse, somewhat larger than other white mice and quite friendly. I could keep it in my hand and stroke it with one finger and it seemed to like it. Once it bit me and I punished it immediately with a snap with my middle finger against its head and it never did that again. For food it got seeds and it seemed to like it, also bread or crackers and pieces of nuts and almonds. Unfortunately it got quite fat.

I let it crawl into my sleeve and it went up high behind the collar and I could direct it by pressing slightly from behind towards the other sleeve till it re-appeared at the other hand. It seemed to like that game and I did it quite often. It was a very clean mouse, cleaning itself almost constantly. There was no smell from it in the room and it never made any noise. The cage was in the back of my room on top of a trunk. This little mouse was a good medicine for me, calming my nerves like a tranquilizer, when I was in despair.

Shortly before Hedy and Johanna arrived in Havana from New York, I got rid of that mouse, thinking that Hedy would not like to have it in our room. It was a wrong move, I thought later, as I thought that Johanna would have liked to play with that animal. I took it to the laboratory of Vieta-Plasencia, where I had worked almost daily, experimenting with snake venom.

It was an interesting spectacle when I put the mouse into a cage to the other mice, when they all came from all sides to admire my mouse, almost twice as big as they were. There seemed to be no end to it. They surrounded it and smelled it constantly like a world wonder. When I see how my grandchildren like big and also little pets

I remember my little white mouse, like hamsters and play with them.

Interview with Hedy.

I was born on November 15th, 1902, as the first of three children, which my parents had, followed within one year and 1½ months by Lisa, who was born on January 3rd, 1904, and then, another 2½ years later by Erich, who was born on September 30th, 1906. We had a very happy childhood, there was love and contentment. I went to public school, a short walk from our home, where I always was a favorite of the teacher, and I liked school very much. My first teacher's name was Mrs. Schwanzer, and I think I was a good student, because I got good marks, and I also remember that she liked the way I kept my school books, my copybooks. Sometimes she put secretly chocolate into my schoolbag, which I then discovered at home, and since I was really her favorite, she invited my sister to come to my class and just sit there and listen. This went on for 5 years in public school and my mother also became very friendly with the teacher.

I also had pleasant memories of summer vacations. We went together with my mother to the country, spent many weeks there, always in beautiful places, where we also met nice people. I learned swimming at an early age, at about 4 years, and was very proud of it. My mother took good care of us. She was a very beautiful woman, much admired and loved by our very large family.

My father was one of 17 brothers and sisters, and there were many nieces and nephews, and my parents were sort of a center of the family. Whenever somebody had problems and needed advice, they came to my parents for it, because they were considered as very outstanding people with a very sensible outlook on life.

Besides, they had a very active social life, with many friends around all the time. They went out a lot, before the

First World War especially; they really enjoyed social life.

My mother was a gay person, very friendly, had a great sense of humor and everybody loved her, and she had visitors all the time.

I remember that all the cousins came and adored her. There was a great difference in age between my father and my mother, about 19 years. My father also enjoyed company and a pleasant way of life. He was a general practitioner, who liked visiting his patients at home, was very friendly with them, and they appreciated him very much and loved him.

He had many very clever and somewhat funny utterances, which made the round in the family, which showed much wisdom. He was called "Uncle Beni". He was a very modest man, never a spend-thrift, and loved his family life and his home, and his office and his friends. My mother just the same. She was unusually pretty.

We were very good children, we never were naughty, and had also a good reputation as the best brought-up children. No problems of any kind. After grammar school, I had to take an examination to be admitted at the Beamtentoechter Lyceum, which was not easy to get in, but I made it. From then on, I had to travel by streetcar, leave very early in the morning, which was quite a hardship for me, to get up so early. It was quite a long trip, an hour, I think, to that school. There I learned French and English. In many subjects I was a good student, but in mathematics I was not so outstanding, as it was my worst subject. My geography and history teacher, I remember, later owned the hotel "Zum weissen Roessel" (White Horse) on the Wolfgang See, as she married the owner of that place. I was also her favorite student. Only with mathematics I had trouble. There was a professor Zeeman,

who always was picking on me, although I tried very hard to please him, but I was not very successful with him. But in English I was good. The teacher's name was Bendoëf, who became later one of the leading Nazis in Vienna, which surprised me, because she was a very intelligent and educated person. I went to that lyceum for 8 years, took the last examination, which was called Matura.

Lisa went later to the same school, and we travelled together in the morning and came home together. We had a professor there who became much interested in me and he encouraged me to take a course in chemistry which he had started. So, I studied chemistry.

There was a professor Grafe and a professor Feigl. Later I studied at the Vienna University chemistry, but as a non-ordinary student, since I had not learned Latin. I tried to make up for it, but it did not work out. But I studied anyway at the University for a few years.

I then got a job in Tchechoslovakia as a chemist, where my cousin, Ernst Goldschmied, was Generaldirektor of one of the biggest sugar refineries. I worked there in a laboratory, where I made analyses of sugar, which was made from beets, also made analyses of the molasses. I lived with my relatives there, who had a wonderful home, a big house, very elegant. Adolph visited me there quite often on weekends, and once or twice my mother and Lisa visited me there too. I worked during the summer sugar campaign, which lasted 3 months, for 2 or 3 years.

Here I interrupted the interview with Hedy to avoid duplication. I had written already in detail about our marriage, our home and office in Vienna, in the Taborstrasse, the birth of Francis in 1931 and then of Johanna in 1936, the invasion of Austria by the Nazis in March of 1938 and in consequence of it the breaking

up of our pleasant family life by the emigration first of Lisa in May, then of Erich and Lisl in August of that year, and finally my emigration with Francis on September 30th, 1938. What I wanted Hedy to tell is what happened afterwards, how she continued living with Johanna after we left.

Here is what she said: It was a very sad moment, when I saw that I had to send my child away. The situation in Vienna had become more and more dangerous for Jewish children. Francis had to leave the school and was put into a Jewish class. He could not play anymore with his friends in the street; they always offended him and we saw that it got worse and worse for a Jewish child, that there was no way to live and to be educated.

At that time, everybody tried to get away as fast as possible and whoever could escape and run, did it. Adolph had the wonderful opportunity to go to Cuba, through the help of my uncle Josef Feingold, who was already in Paris, who had given him tickets for a boat trip, and through the help of my cousin Suzanne, who was working at the Alliance Israelite, he got 500 dollars landing money as a kind of a loan. We had then different options, of course. We figured that it would be wise that Francis get out of Vienna with Adolph, and that I and Johanna stay on. I thought that I will get my American immigration visa, since we had a very good affidavit, very soon and will go then right to the United States with Johanna, on the way pick up Francis in Paris. I thought that in the meantime it would not be so dangerous for us than for a doctor and a school child. Johanna was then 3 years old - she was called then Harnerl - and I thought I can stay on with her and pack up all our belongings. I also thought of my parents, did not want to leave them, thought I could help them

in some way. May be it was good that I was there; and in the meantime I started to learn different things. I knew I will have to make a living in the United States, which would help me after I arrive there with a little child, without money. I learned sewing, I took courses, I learned baking and making candies, and whatever courses were offered. I even tried to become a maid. Young women were admitted as maids in England, but they had to pass a test and therefore had to learn certain things. That I did too, I scrubbed the floor, and washed. I don't remember what else. I passed the test too, and if I would not have gotten the American Immigration visa, I would have been able to leave for England as a maid with my little girl. Then finally, I had packed all my things, and the furniture and everything was put in a lift-van. The Nazis who did that were even very nice to me, allowed me to take silver along, which usually was forbidden to Jews. I also remember a little incident, when they were friendly towards me, for instance in the streetcar, when one Nazi jumped up and gave me his seat, which was really amazing. Or when my parents were supposed to give up their apartment, because there was a law that Jewish people were not allowed to live in apartments facing the street and had to live in the rear of the buildings, I went to a very important Nazi, who was a former patient of Adolph and told him the story that the neighbors wanted to throw out my parents of their apartment, where my father had lived already for 40 years in that apartment, when he was a bachelor, before he got married. He gave me a paper on which he wrote that Dr. Ziegler can stay in this apartment. The Nazis could not understand how we managed that. So, they could stay and they were glad, but it was not for a long time. When I was gone, they lost their place.

When our furniture were packed in a liftvan, I moved with my little girl to my parents' and lived together with them. It was a very sad situation, as there were very strict laws instituted. When it came to food or to get out into the street, everything was so arranged that the Jews couldn't go on living anymore. The meat they got was so bad that you wouldn't even give it to a dog here.

I had to wait for our visa over a year, after Adolph had left. When he got his passport, he also got one for me. But when the Nazis saw my passport they said: "My God, you haven't left already? I had to appear many times in the Rothschild palais, where there was the passport office, and they told me that they will send me to Poland if I will not leave soon. They punished me by having me stand there with the face towards the wall. I had to go to other places to get proof that I did not owe any taxes, also to a place where they took my picture and fingerprints, like a criminal. The American consulate was not in a hurry to give me the visa; there was a quota system and they made things difficult. Many of our friends were ready to go, but the American consulate found something to delay it, or to deny the visa. Friends of ours, a Dr. Pollatschek and his wife, committed suicide, when the doctor in the consulate denied them the visa, because he had a kind of eczema on a foot, which resisted treatments.

Finally, when I went to the American consul with Johanna - she was the cutest child you can imagine, with big blue eyes and rosy cheeks, blond hair, looking more like a child the Nazis adored, the Nordic type - everybody liked her and smiled. She was an asset to me, and the American consul examined her and wanted her to count. She was about 4 years old and she refused to open

her mouth, would not speak one word. But they just accepted it and laughed and loved her, because she was so adorable. So, we got the visas, and the consul told me that he will send the papers for Francis to the American consul in Paris, so that he could get his visa there.

The situation had changed in the meantime. The original plan was that I would pass through Paris and pick up Francis. I had even tickets for the boat "Normandy" for all of us. But the war had started on September 3, 1939, and I could not go to France anymore, and we had to leave from Rotterdam, Holland. Correspondence between Austria and France was also not possible anymore on account of the war, but indirect contact through Anny Lux in Amsterdam or Maurice Ziegler was possible, though difficult and insufficient, and I hoped that Francis had gotten his visa in France and would join us in Rotterdam. Lisa had told me later that the consul in Paris had denied Francis the visa, when Suzanne went to the consulate and that he had said that Francis needed another affidavit, and that he could leave later with another boat.

After I got the visa for me and Johanna in Vienna, there was the problem to get the tickets for the boat. A very good friend of mine, Mr. Lazarus, got them for us under most difficult circumstances for the boat "Rotterdam", it was just a miracle. He was such a wonderful good person that nothing was too much for him.

So, I went with Johanna to Amsterdam and it was there like a different world, where the Germans did not have any influence yet. It was a peaceful, beautiful country, the people so friendly and lovely. We couldn't get over it, we were so impressed. We came from a place, where we lived like in hell, in fear all the

time from one hour to another; we didn't know what would happen to us, what sadistic plans the Nazis had, and now we were in the most friendly country and there were preparations for Christmas celebrations, Saint Nicholas was there and Johanna got so many beautiful gifts. They brought us coffee when we arrived at the station. My cousins, Max and Annie Lux were there and received us with open arms. I got invitations to the finest homes and most exquisite parties and dinners. There was also my cousin Maurice Ziegler, I remember, in Amsterdam. In Holland there was still abundance and wonderful food and wonderful things to see. My great disappointment was that Francis did not come. There was no contact possible with France on account of the war and up to the last minute, when we left Holland, I did not know what had happened. This was very sad for me, because he was in great danger there.

When we went on the boat, it was also a great impression, the lights, gayety, music. I remember the wonderful food, which I hadn't seen for a long time. The voyage lasted 12 days, but I became seasick very soon. People prayed on the boat, as there was the danger that the boat may hit a mine, which the Germans had laid, which would have killed all the people on the boat.

I was most of the time seasick and lying in bed, while my little girl had a good time. She looked gorgeous, with rosy cheeks, and ran around the boat, a friend of everybody. But I thought I would not survive, I felt so miserable. My body got colder and colder and my hands blue. It was a very bad sickness and the doctors didn't do much for me. I was lying there, very miserable, didn't eat anything until we arrived in New York. At that time, I think, I felt already a little better, and got

ready to get off the boat, where so many of my cousins and friends waited for me, Maurice Ziegler and Hansi Hilkwicz and Dr. Lazarus and Dr. Holzer. All together, I remember, there were 9 people waiting for me and they had everything ready for me, a home and a job, money they gave me, everything. I must say I always had the best of friends.

So, we started life in New York. I could work right away, crochét-ing gloves. But, of course, it was not enough. I also got from the Council of Jewish Women some support. I had a little apartment in Manhattan on West 89th Street near the home of Hansi Hilkwicz. Maurice had given her money for food for us and we went there for meals, but only for a very short time, when she told us that she could not give us anything anymore for the amount of money she had gotten. I did not believe my ears. I had thought that I had understanding and helpful relatives there, but instead she became very nasty and very hostile and treated me really bad, as if I had no right to be there. She told me that I had no right to live in a good neighborhood, things like that.

Johanna got very sick, had a severe tonsillitis, and they thought it was diphtheria, but it was not. Life was not easy for me. Johanna went to a Kindergarten, to which I brought her every morning and on my way back from work, I did my shopping and picked her up. Prices were so low, I remember, that I could buy a chicken for 60 cents, a whole big chicken, a basket of strawberries for 8 cents, a pound of coffee for 15 cents. So, I managed. I had always good friends around, like Dr. Lazarus, Dr. Lindenfeld, Dr. Holzer. Then some friends offered me a place in Queens, where I could take care of a house. So, I did that, I moved with Johanna to Queens. It was a nice little house, it was even offered

to me to buy it for \$ 5.000. I could have bought it, but there was no hope that Adolph could come and live there. He stayed in Havana for years and years. Else, I could have managed very well. But he wanted us to go there, to Havana. It was frustrating for me. I was all the time trying to do something for my parents in Vienna, find somebody who would give them an affidavit.

Very soon when we arrived in the United States, a Mrs. Ray Bruell visited us. Her husband, Max Bruell, was a brother of Sami Bruell, a banker, who had arrived in the United States as a refugee from Vienna shortly after me. His son Paul had arrived there a few months before him. To come back to Mrs. Ray Bruell, she was very friendly towards me, took me and Johanna once out to the Radio City Music Hall and invited us to her home in Woodmere, Long Island. Her husband, Max Bruell, liked and respected my father very much and promised me that he would write an affidavit for him and my mother. I was very happy about it and counted very much on it. I waited for quite some time. But one day, I received a letter from him, in which he told me that he could not give me that affidavit, since he had to take care of his family. It was a terrible blow to me. I was quite sure that his wife Ray was the one who had influenced him, and that he could not help it and had to retreat from his promise. I had lost valuable time. I then tried to find other people. A rabbi from a synagogue gave me then an affidavit, and I myself wrote one too. But both these affidavits were rejected by the American consul in Vienna as too weak.

And then there were other very bad news, when the Germans invaded France and occupied the northern part of France, just that area, where Francis and Lisa were. I had lost all contact with

them and was very worried about them. Just at that time Adolph became very insistent that I leave New York and join him in Havana. So, I finally had to give in and leave with Johanna for Havana. We left New York by train to Miami, and went from there by boat for Havana, arrived there on October 1st, 1940.

1941

CHAPTER 25

SUCCESS WITH VIPERIN.

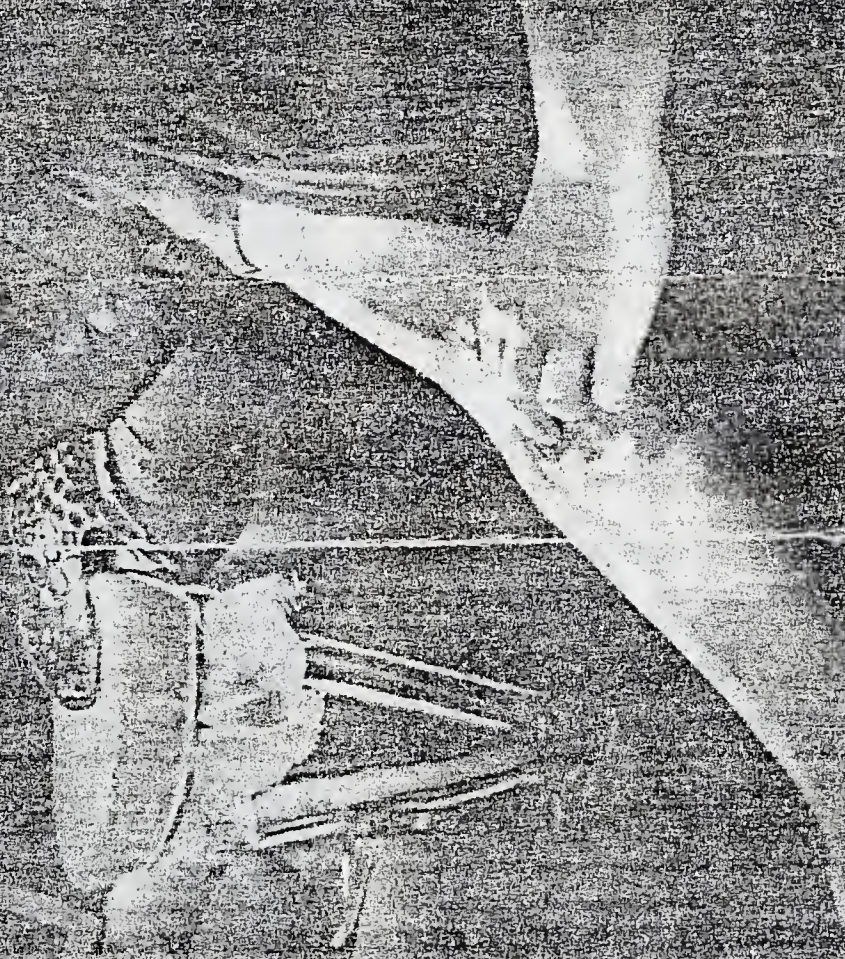
I will now go back to the description of my laboratory work in Havana, which I had interrupted. These were laborious experiments with mice, which I had to buy in pet shops, but there were not too many available and I had to pay 50 cents per mouse. I needed each time at least 20 mice and I had to spend many times an amount of ten dollars or more for each experiment. It was at first the white powder, with which I experimented, and I found out that it was correct what I had been told in Vienna, that it contained in one gramme the amount that went into a 5-gramm tube of ointment. I also finally found out that the number of mouse units per gramme was This I could also confirm, when I extracted the venom from a few tubes of ointment, which I had brought with me from Vienna, and used the extract on mice.

I now knew what I needed to be able to produce the ointment. Now Mr. Johnson was again very helpful, by introducing

me to Dr. Vieta, who had one of the biggest pharmaceutical laboratories in Havana. He was professor of pharmacology at the medical school of the University of Havana. My Spanish was at that time already much better, so that I could explain to him what I had in mind. He showed great interest and understanding, especially since I could show him that the preparation Viperin was distributed in many countries in Europe, also that there were scientific articles published, which showed the good results of that medicine. He had at that time an associate, Dr. Plasencia, and the laboratory ran under the name Vieta-Plasencia, and he had to discuss the problem at first with him, before he gave me a positive answer. A few days later, I was invited to a conference, in which, besides Dr. Vieta and Dr. Plasencia the lawyer of the company, a Dr. Rojas, participated. The result was that a contract was prepared and signed by all participants. I was to receive royalties from all the preparations sold, as far as I remember 6 or 7 %. I had to perform experiments with different kinds of snake venom, which had to be bought in Central- or South-America. Very soon we received small amounts of venom from a company in Costa Rica, among them also venom of - - - which is common in that country, and I started soon to prepare the ointment with a Lanolin base. I had to test the venom again on mice to determine the strength and the amount that had to go into one gramme of ointment. I tried then the ointment on myself and other people, in the laboratory as well as on some of my friends, when they had colds, and the results were excellent.

It took much time till the company had everything ready, tin tubes with the name Viperin printed on them, little boxes

VENENO
DE SERPIENTE



EN FORMA DE POMADA

NUEVA TERAPIA
PARA EL VENENO

LABORATORIO FARMACIA



La nueva
terapia de
las rinitis

VITPERRIN

VIPERIN

POMADA A BASE DE VENENO DE SERPIENTE, SEGUN MECHNER.

La preparación Viperin sirve para el tratamiento de los catarros de la nariz de todo tipo y es una pomada que se frota en la piel del brazo y antebrazo. Consiste en esencia del veneno de determinada variedad de vipéridos, emulsionado en un vehículo graso para facilitar la penetración del ingrediente por la piel. Es completamente inofensivo, pues aparte del uso externo de la pomada contiene solamente una muy pequeña y bien dosificada cantidad del veneno. También en los niños se puede usar la pomada sin peligro alguno.

INDICACIONES:

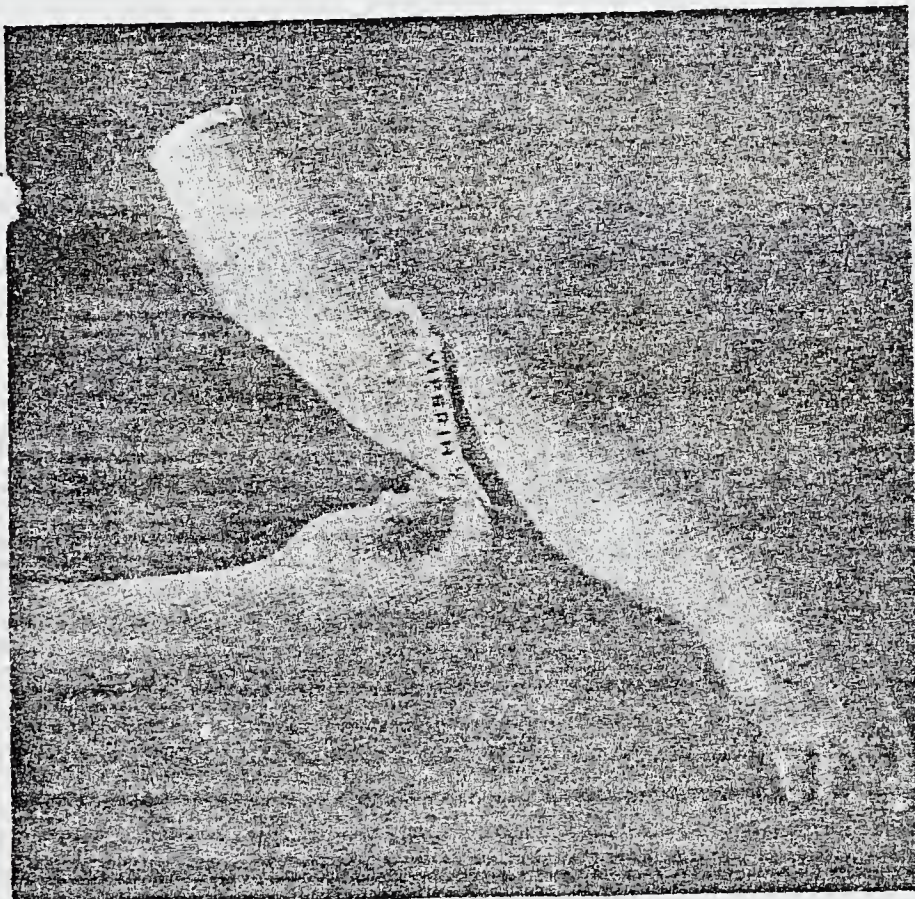
Rinitis aguda, rinitis vasomotriz, rinitis alérgica (fiebre del heno), rinitis crónica hipertrofiante, sinusitis, ocena, jaqueca rinógena.

ACCION:

Los efectos, que son resolutivos y persistentes, estriban en una des- congestión de la mucosa nasal, que se basa en una constricción de los vasos pequeños y capilares y son tan rápidos, que a veces desde la primera aplicación disminuye y aún desaparece la secreción nasal (muchas veces en el curso de pocos minutos); se mejora la respiración por la nariz y disminuye y desaparece la jaqueca. Las crisis de estornudos acaban también muy pronto.

APLICACION:

Para alcanzar el éxito, es muy importante que el medicamento se use en la forma apropiada. Tan pronto como sea posible, después de los primeros síntomas de un constipado, se debe hacer la aplicación de la pomada. Limpiando primero las manos con agua y jabón, se aplica una tirita de unos tres o cuatro centímetros de longitud, de la pomada (en los niños uno o dos centímetros) en la parte interna del brazo y antebrazo, exactamente en las proximidades de la flexura del codo. (Vea la figura).



A continuación se frota la pomada vigorosamente, con tres o cuatro dedos, hasta que el sitio de aplicación quede seco y ligeramente enrojecido, lo cual sucede al cabo de uno o dos minutos. El sitio de aplicación debe ser bastante amplio, digamos del medio del brazo al medio del antebrazo, evitando las partes muy velludas.

La aplicación se repetirá dos o más veces por día, cambiando de brazo hasta observar una franca mejoría. Después se seguirá la aplicación durante dos o tres días más.

RINITIS AGUDA (Catarro Común):

En esta afección se obtiene muy rápidamente el éxito cuando se siguen las instrucciones anteriores. La rinitis desaparece dentro de las 24 horas, hasta un máximo de 48 horas. En muchos casos, cuando la pomada se usa al comenzar los primeros síntomas, la rinitis desaparece después de una sola aplicación. No obstante, es recomendable que se continúe con la aplicación durante dos o tres días más; así se evitará con más seguridad la recidiva.

RINITIS VASOMOTRIZ:

En esta afección se ha de efectuar un tratamiento algo más largo, y se debe hacer la aplicación mientras subsista el catarro. Aún en aquellos casos en los cuales el proceso databa de diez años o más, ya dentro de unos días del tratamiento con el Viperin se obtuvo un alivio, una disminución y aún desaparición de la abundante secreción nasal y de las crisis de estornudos.

RINITIS ALERGICA (Fiebre del Heno):

Se debe hacer la aplicación inmediatamente después de los primeros síntomas, repitiéndola varias veces al día, hasta que desaparezcan todas las manifestaciones del proceso. En caso de aparición de nuevos síntomas, deberá frotarse otra vez la pomada.

RINITIS CRONICA HIPERTROFIANTE:

En estos casos bastará usar la pomada una o dos veces al día. Las molestias, consistentes en sequedad, obstrucción nasal, formación de costras, jaqueca y laxitud general desaparecen la mayor parte de las veces con toda rapidez.

SINUSITIS:

Solo es necesario usar la pomada una o dos veces al día. La des- congestión de la mucosa nasal que produce el Viperin origina una liberación de las aberturas de los senos, permitiendo así el drenaje de la secreción purulenta, desapareciendo por lo tanto la jaqueca.

OCENA:

Se ha de efectuar un tratamiento largo, empleando la pomada una vez por día. Poco a poco disminuye y desaparece la formación de costras en la nariz, así como la jaqueca y la fetidez. Se observaron mejoras notables de larga duración en el estado de hipertrofia.

JAQUECA RINOGENA:

Basta usar la pomada una o dos veces al día.

PRESENTACION COMERCIAL:

En tubos de 5 gramos.

LABORATORIOS VIETA-PLASENCIA

Ave. S. Bolívar (Reina 310.

Habana.

for the tubes, instructions how to use the ointment, which had to go into each little box, propaganda material, etc. It took many months, till the product was distributed and sold in pharmacies. I had to prepare the ointment in bigger amounts, in the beginning only one or two kilograms, later up to 5 kilograms. Soon very favorable results started to come in, also publications in medical magazines. I received payment each time I delivered a bigger amount of the ointment. The first payment I received at about the time, when Hedy and Johanna had arrived in Havana, and we were very happy with it.

I had mentioned the lawyer Dr. Rojas, who had prepared the contract between me and the company Vieta-Plasencia. This man became very friendly towards me and showed great interest in my personal situation. I told him among other things that I had a son in France and that I was very anxious to get him out of there and over to Cuba. He spoke about it to Dr. Vieta, who in turn discussed the matter with me. Dr. Vieta was an important person in Havana, at that time dean of the medical school. He happened to be a personal friend of the director of the immigration department, Dr. Ituarte, who was also a physician. Very soon Dr. Vieta arranged an appointment for me with Dr. Ituarte, who was very friendly towards me. As soon as I arrived, he took me out to the seashore, which was close by, and took me along on a big yacht for a cruise in the bay of Havana. I had there the opportunity to tell him my story, and he said right away that that was not a difficult problem and that the visa for Francis would be sent right away to the Cuban consul in Nice. I was, of course, very happy, but was too shy to ask him also for a visa for Lisa, had also not much chance to tell

him the complete story. The result was that the visa was sent only for Francis. I had thought that it would not be too difficult for Lisa to find somebody in Nice, who would take Francis along to Cuba. Lisa tried very hard and contacted many people, who were about to leave Nice for Havana. But no one of them wanted to take the responsibility. It was later on understandable for us. Travelling from France to Portugal was in those days enormously difficult, especially the passage through Spain, which implied changes of trains, which were overfilled, making stops in Madrid and perhaps in other cities, etc. So, the whole thing came to naught and we were quite desperate.

1940

CHAPTER 26

LETTERS FROM THE PARENTS.

There arrived all the time in relatively short intervals letters from my inlaws in Vienna. I have a great collection of these letters, and I will attach all of them as a special supplement for those who will be interested in the details. But a few of them, which are important for the understanding of successive events. I have translated and will insert them here, to show in what condition they were at about the time, when they were living in Hollandstrasse 9, relatively peacefully, but constantly worrying, now not anymore about us, but still about Lisa and Francis. These letters show, better than any description about them, what wonderful people they were, full of love, goodness, and understanding.

The first letter is from the mother and reads as follows:

"My dear Hedy and dear Adolph; Vienna, Oct. 13th, 1940

We were very surprised that a letter from you, dear Hedy, arrived yesterday (on the long day), written 8 days ago in Miami. A few days before, your letter of September 25th came.

Unfortunately, you never answer regarding the main problem (the liftvan). You must have already letters from Julius, considered the problem, and have acted accordingly and rapidly. We were happy with Erich's letter, although it was from way back and hardly satisfied our craving for knowledge. You wrote that aunt Betty has moved again. Where and why? Did Dr. Holzer pass the board examination? What can Dr. Lazarus do for Lisa? You wrote before that you cooked; is it only lately that you don't have a kitchen? Or does it mean that you ate in a buffet while staying in a hotel? We passed well the long day yesterday, but afterwards I had, as you know, slight cramps. Aunt Clara was yesterday afternoon here, she feels happy in her community (?). Uncle Martin was also here, a few days ago. I hope you will have now relaxation and find the time to write us in detail. Very often we had to think over and construct things, as you had forgotten to write us certain details. Especially the meeting of Adolph with you and with Hannerl. Anyway, you, dear Adolph, will write us and in this way supplement each other. Your aunt Rosa is not very happy with Alice in Bucharest, and from your mother we don't have any news. Don't worry about us, since there is now anyway no chance at the American consulate for us. But I beg you to do everything that Julius wrote. Mrs. Glaser sends regards. She advises you also to do what she wrote regarding the liftvan - if there is still time. Julius is very excited about the Erdsteins. Things don't look good there at all. Kiss for me my sweet Hannerle. Everybody finds her very much changed. I would like to know, whether she had recognized you, dear Adolph. With God's will, Lisa and Franzerl will also come soon. Embracing and kissing all of you,

your Mama.

The following lines are an addition to the letter of the 13th of October:

"My dear Adolph:

Today, the 14th of October, arrived your dear and long letter of September 29th. Now we know you all finally together and imagine how your new home is. Meanwhile, we give up the hope to see you soon, and your being together will hardly soon be disrupted. As we see from your plans concerning the extension of Hedy's re-entry permit, you seem to have little hope to get to the U.S. soon. Please, write to Erich and send us the letters. They both were interned. I think you should follow the advice of Julius, which was considered forth and back, if it is not too late. It stays there, well preserved, at your disposal. Again embracing and kissing you, Mama."

There follow now two letters, written by the parents.

"My dear Hedy:

Vienna, October 29th, 1940

Today's letter is for you and hopefully we will have luck as in the case of Hannerl and the letter arrives exactly on the 15th of November. We think now often about last year, when you made preparations at that time for the voyage. Then I could take sweet Hannerl on my arm, and had her as sleep-comrade - in reality, not only like now in my dream. Now my thoughts at night concern my little Franzerl and Lisa, that means also during the day I can not get away from them! Yes, these thoughts are wandering now over all continents and with the exception of you, thanks God, they don't find a fix point. But I want to congratulate you, my dear Hedy, my good child, on your birthday and wish you that you and dear Adolph may again find a permanent home with your dear good children, who

are really so well-bred that that alone constitutes a gift of God. And God may help you to be able to bring up both to become happy beings, and perhaps will fate allow us to live and participate in your happiness. Enjoy this day, in thoughts also on Lisa and Erich, as you always celebrated this day together. Unfortunately, I forgot to write to Erich that we thought much of him on his birthday. - We are well, here the winter has already started. You will not know about that this year. What could be the situation of Lisa and Franzerl? Do you think, dear Hedy, that we will hear from the Runes? Today I met mother Axmann, she sends regards to you. Everybody is glad that you are together. Please, don't forget to send regards for the Rosners. Aunt Elsa will move to the Meisls on November 15th. The letter of Adolph and you I have sent to Minny; she wanted again your address. They live in Bruenn, Königsfeld, Smetanova 41 now, all of them together. Heinrich reached now 70 years. I embrace you heartily and kiss you all.

Your Mama."

Now follows the letter of the father.

"Dearest Hedy, dearest Adolph! October 29th, 1940

It is now one year since you and our sweet Hannerl started the emigration on your birthday, from your parents home, from the place of your birth, parting from your beloved home town, with Hannerl, drawing away from us, looking for a new aim, with the view at an unknown world and an uncertain future. You have proved yourself equal to your task, have known how to assert yourself with Hannerl successfully in a strange world, where the charm of the delightful Hannerl may have facilitated the road. Now, dear Hedy, you have finally

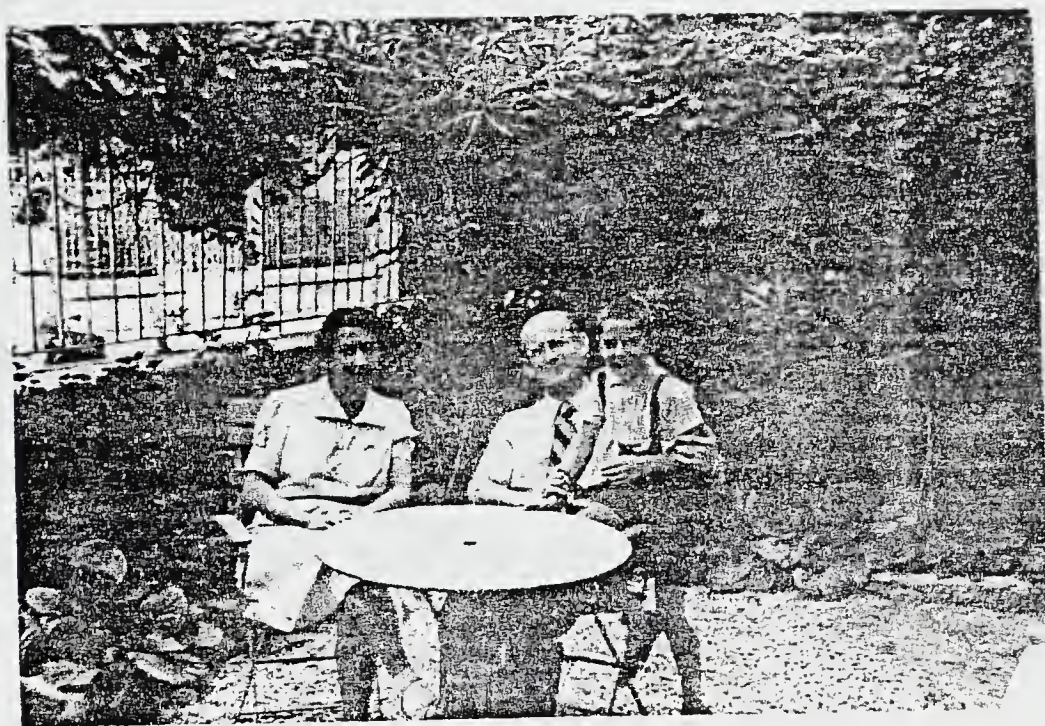
succeeded after more than two years of having been torn apart, after many efforts to get to your husband, with your child, to be united with him and to celebrate your birthday this year on his side, and quieted the longing of dear Adolph, of course with the not yet quieted longing to have your dear Franzerl near you, so that the happiness of the family is for the present not yet complete. But there is legitimate hope that it will soon be fulfilled. The heartiest congratulations are herewith offered on your birthday this year, and wishes that you may always have gladness with husband and children, that you may soon find firm ground and that there may always be with you happiness and satisfaction, for which all expectations seem to be present. So, head high! A kind fate may bring it about that you will soon see again your child with Lisa, that you will embrace Franzerl, and that you will be able to guard his life and thriving. - Besides, in the face of enormous happenings in the world and the continuous overthrows of human destinies, one should look at everything more beyond his own "Self" and his fate and that of his loved ones should not be let come too close to oneself. One should persevere, endure, and resign, without lamenting, but not forgetting the goodness and love of humanity and in this way fight the battle of existence. - We are expecting your detailed description of the development of your further progress, how Hedy and Hannerl have adapted to the new surroundings and circumstances, especially how the golden Hannerl, the 4-year old globetrotter inserts herself with Pape and enjoys herself. We have here for a few days cold weather. We are well in our apartment, quite comfortable. You probably have still warm weather and can still



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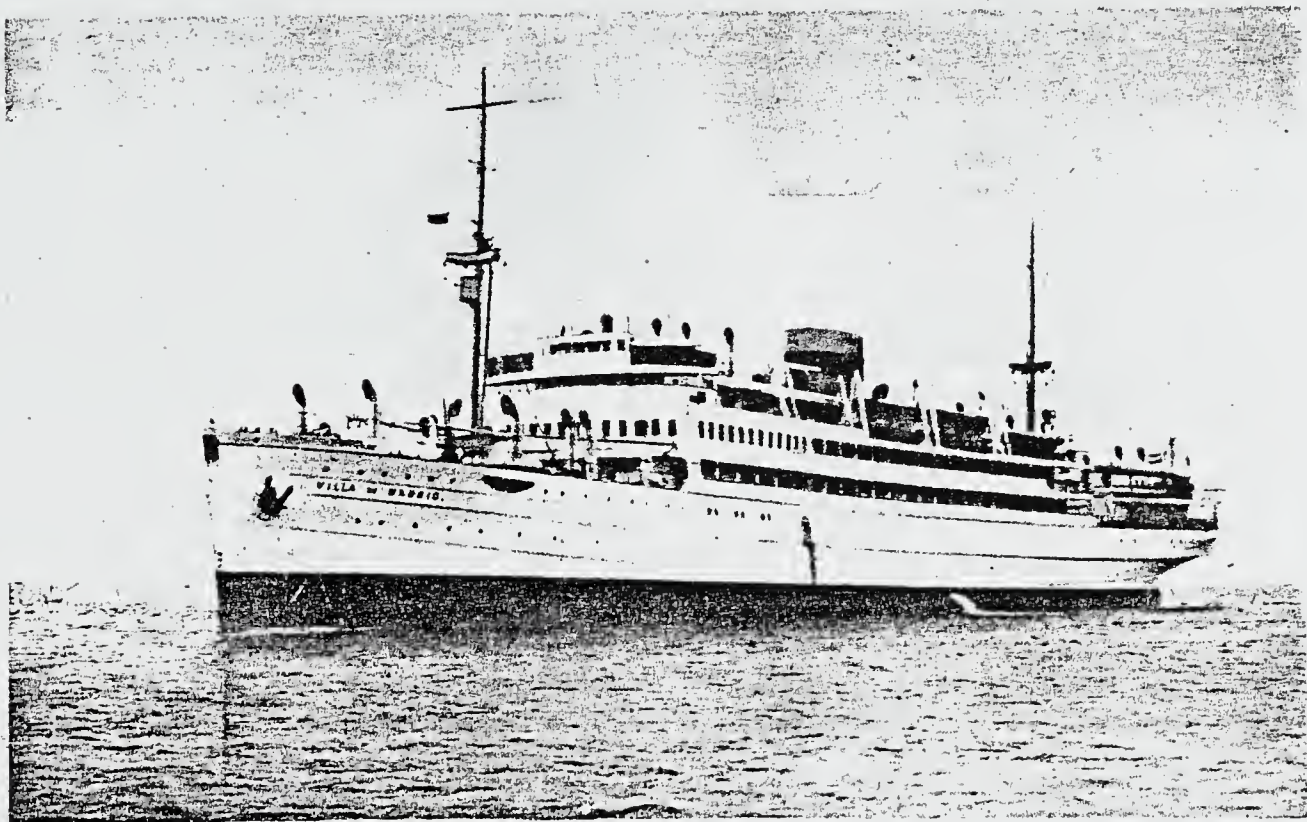


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Francis with Lisa and Paul in Nice, France



The boat "Villa de Madrid", bringing Lisa and Francis to Cuba

PAPA



MAMA



FRANZ



JUANITA





R.to l: Adolph, Hedy, Lisa,
Francis and Johanna

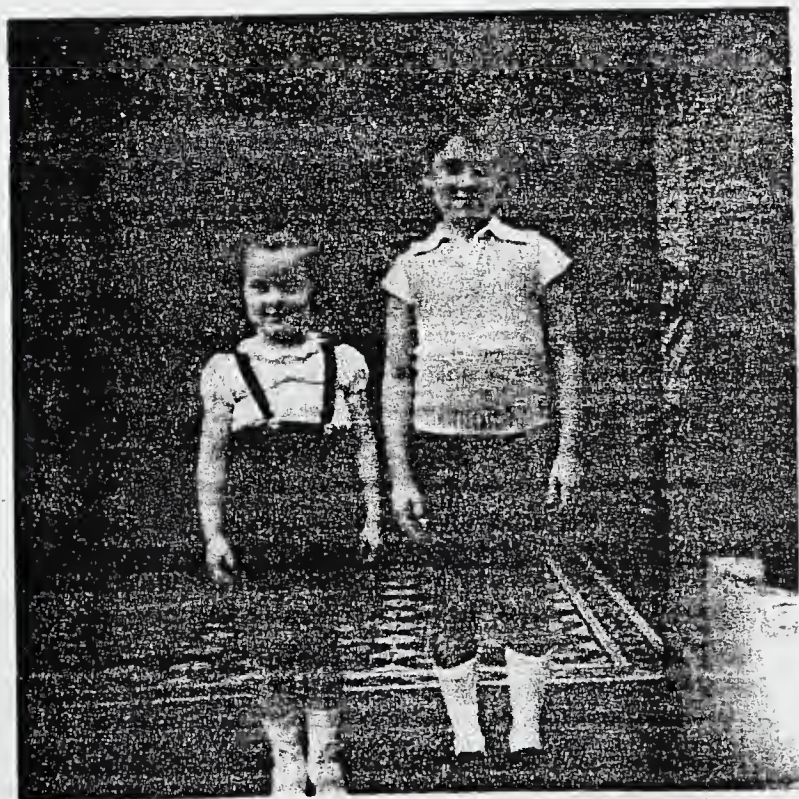
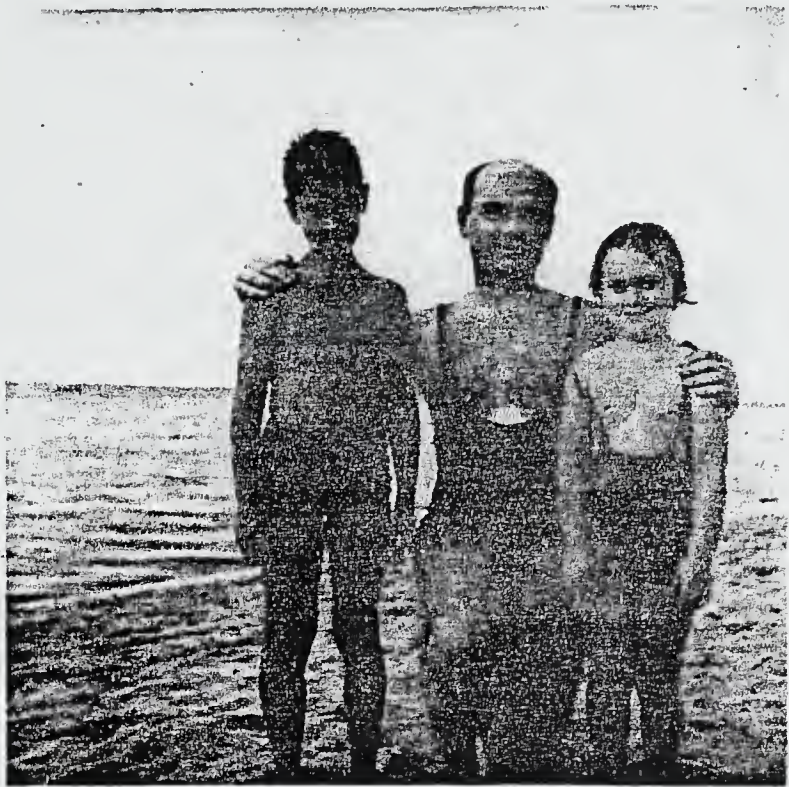


Francis and Johanna



Oct. 1941







Lisa, Mr.Klinger, Hedy
Francis and Johanna



1942

TERESITA



habe und 9 Jahre alt bin.

In welchen Stock wohnst

Du Mama.

Lieber Papa schreibe mir

bald weil ich weiss, dass die

Mama keine Zeit zum schreiben
hat.

Viele Tussi von Franzi und

viele Grüsse und Küsse für die

Frau Dr. Laxel

Liebe Mama und lieber Papa!

Jetzt habe ich Osterferien und bin

den ganzen Tag draussen und wenn

die Lisa fort geht da bleibe ich

da um mit den Kindern zu spielen

Wenn die Lisa wieder nachhause

kommt darf ich mich mich zeigen

weil sonst ruft sie mich herein

um Euch einen Brief zu schreiben

- wie heute.

In der Schule war ich der

2. von 29 Schüler. Die Lisa hat
mir ein Buch gekauft. Da seht
Ihr wie es mir gut geht.

Glaubt Ihr, dass es eine
lieben Gott gibt? Ich glaube, dass
es das Gewissen ist und wenn man
etwas schlechtes machen will
da macht man es rasch und tut
damit es niemand sieht und tut
sich dabei weh.

Wie geht es Euch?

Ich schreibe jetzt schreibe
ich jedesmal der Hannerl wen
die Lisa oder ich Euch einen
Brief schreibe. Das ist meine
größte Freude. Die Hannerl soll
dir einmal einen Brief für mich
diktiert. Die Hannerl wird sich
hoffentlich mit meinem Osterei
freun. Hat sie ein Osterei dort
bekommen?

Ich habe am 1. Mai Geburtstag

bathe in the ocean. Write about everything and about relatives and friends in the U.S.A. Regards to Mrs. Wagner, Mr. Weinberg, also to you from many people. Again heartiest birthday congratulations to Hedy, all conceivable goods. To sweet Hannerl thousand pussis. Embracing and kissing you, Papa.

We were quite unhappy that we could not do anything about Lisa and Francis. Hedy had met one evening a lady, who had her son in Belgium. She spoke about nothing else than her fear that the Germans will get him and that she will never see him again. Hedy became very restless from then on and was talking day and night about Francis, cried all the time "Bring me my boy over, bring me my boy over", especially at night. I did not know what to do.

At about that time a letter from Francis came, which I am inserting here, with a translation into English; The letter was not dated, written at a time, when he was already in Nice, with Lisa and Paul. It reads as follows:

"Dear Mama and dear Papa!

I have now Easter vacation and I am all day long outside and when Lisa leaves, I stay here to play with the children. When Lisa comes home again, I don't show up, because otherwise she would call me to come in to write you a letter, like today. In school I was the second best of 29 pupils. Lisa had bought me a book. So you can see how well I am off.

Do you believe that there is God? I think it is the conscience, and when one wants to do something bad, one does it fast, so that nobody would see it, and causes pain to oneself.

How are you? I will from now on write to Hannerl, each

time Lisa or I will write a letter to you. Thst is my greatest pleasure. Hannerl should dictate to you once a letter for me. Hannerl will, I hope, be happy with my Easter egg. Did she get there an Easter egg?

I will have my birthday on May 1st, and will be 9 years old. On which floor do you live, Mama?

Dear Papa, write to me very soon, because I know that Mama has no time to write.

Many kisses from Franzi
and many greetings and kisses for Mrs. Dr. Saxl."

CHAPTER 27

A SAVIOR FOR LISA AND FRANCIS.

We had moved at about the end of 1940 from the Malecon to a small garden apartment in Ampliacion de Almendares, a suburb of Havana, where we shared the apartment with a Viennese pharmacist, Mr. Glussmann, his wife, and little daughter Elfi, who was of about the same age as Johanna. The apartment consisted of four rooms and a little kitchen, quite primitive, but we liked it, especially on account of the garden, where there were banana trees and great many flowers, and especially beautiful poinsettias, very tall ones. The children played nicely together, also with little Hortensia, the daughter of our landlords Martinez. The family Glussmann got soon the immigrations visas for the United States, and we had then the whole apartment all to ourselves. We often went to the nearby beach from there, had to ride there a short distance by bus. I was getting busy at that time, had developed a medical practice, and had to make house calls, earning some money. I had to make the calls by bus, of course.

Then, one evening, a miracle happened. The telephone rang

and a man, whose name I have forgotten and whom I had not known before, said that he would like to bring a patient over, who is in severe pain. It was a good friend of his, a Cuban, an officer of the immigration department. I was frightened and told him that I had no license to practice medicine in Cuba, and that I did not want him to bring that man to me. Then that man started to talk to me. He said that he was in severe pain and that I should help him, that he was suffering for 8 years from trigeminus neuralgia and that no doctor could help him, that he was an officer of the immigration department and that I should therefore not be afraid to see him, also that he did not ask me to treat him, but that he only wanted to talk to me. I finally gave in, and the two men arrived within about half an hour. His name was Agramonte, a tall good-looking man. I had to give him a pain-relieving tablet, before he could talk to me. I told him that he probably knew that trigeminus neuralgia was an incurable disease, and that only an injection of alcohol into a ganglion on the base of the brain could help. He knew about it, and he was once already determined to have it done, but that he would have had to sign a document that he knew of the danger that the injection could cause blindness of one or perhaps both eyes, and that he therefore did not want the injection, that he had seen many important physicians, professors of the University, and that none of them knew anything else to recommend than the injection. He told me that he has had the condition for 8 years, with almost daily attacks, which lasted for hours, and that only strong drugs could calm his pains, morphine or big doses of codeine or similar drugs. The pains started on the right side below the eye, irradiated from

there to the right side of the nose and upper lip, caused redness and sweating of the right side of the face and tearing of the right eye. He also said that he will probably commit suicide, if this goes on much longer. I asked him now about his teeth, whereupon he pulled out of his mouth a denture, comprising all upper teeth of the right side. On further questioning he explained that he had to have the teeth extracted, as some doctors said that the pain may be caused by a bad tooth and that in the course of 8 years he had to have all the upper teeth on the right side extracted. My next idea was that a part of the root of a tooth may have remained in the jaw, and I asked him about X-rays. He then pulled out of his pocket a number of X-ray films, which I examined carefully. They did not seem to show any part of a root, nor any other abnormality. I then told him that X-rays don't always tell the truth, that they even sometimes lie. He was astonished to hear that. Next I asked him whether he has had any relief after one of the many tooth extractions. He told me "Yes, after the first extraction" and that that was a very bad tooth, and that there was secretion of pus out of the wound for about 6 months, till the opening finally closed up, and that some time afterwards the same pain had started again, and that there was no relief after the extraction of the other teeth.

I did not have to ask any other question, as I knew now the correct diagnosis. I now put my left hand to the back of his head and with the index finger of my right hand I pressed hard against the area next to the nostril on the right side, causing him a severe pain. On further more gentle examination I could then feel a slight swelling in that area, very sensi-

tive to slight pressure. I asked him whether he had a good dentist and he said that he had a very good one, who was a professor and teaching dentistry at the University. I told him that he should go to him and tell him that he was told that he had a deposit from an old abscess in the bone in the area, where the tip of the root of the right second incisor tooth once was, which was pressing against the nerve, and that he needed a little operation to clean out that area. I showed him by pulling up my lip, where the incision should be done, that that was the ~~the~~ nearest spot to reach that area. He understood and both men left. He did not tell me that he will come back. After about 10 days he called up and came back, this time without the other man. He told me that the dentist had done that operation and that he had found some dry material there, something like sand, and that he was free of any pain for about one week, but that the pain had now started again. I asked him how ^{he} had made the operation and he said that he had drilled a hole in the bone in the same direction, in which the tooth had been pulled out, and not high up, where I had shown him. I told him that he should go back to the dentist and explain to him what I had shown him, where the operation should be done. He asked me to accompany him and explain it to the dentist. I refused to do that, told him that that would be very embarrassing for me, but he insisted and almost forced me to get into his car, and we drove to the dentist. It was very unpleasant for me, but I plaid my part, I think, very well, telling him that he was the expert and that I could not tell him anything, since I did not know much about dentistry, that I was only a general practitioner, but that there is a

possibility that there was more of that calcium deposit in the bone, and that it should be easy to reach it high up and that a strip of gauze should be put into the cavity. He spoke a lot, told me that he had done that kind of operation hundreds of times, and wanted to do it right away on that patient. But the patient wanted it postponed for the next day, since he had already eaten lunch and wanted it done when the stomach was empty. I was happy when I was again out in the street.

I did not hear anything from that man for about three weeks, when he suddenly appeared at our home and told me that I had cured him completely, that after the second operation, in which more of that sand-like material was found and cleaned out and a tampon was put in, he had waited three weeks, to be sure that the pains would not come back. Now, he said, he was sure that the sufferings were definitely over. He now asked, whether there is anything that he could do for me. I said that I thought that he could, and I told him that I had a son and sister-in-law, who are in France, and that he could perhaps, as an officer of the immigration department, be able to help me to bring them over to Cuba. "Yes!" he said, "of course he could". And I had to go with him in his car right away, and he took me to a notary public, where a document was prepared, giving the names, age, and address of Lisa and Francis, and stating that the legal presuppositions for their immigration to Cuba had been fulfilled, consisting of deposits of 500 dollars per person, also bank deposits of 2000 dollars per person, and deposits for the return trip for each person, and that they should therefore be given visas for entering Cuba. This was not exactly the wording of the document, which I don't

remember, but the meaning. With the document we drove first to the immigration department, where it was signed, perhaps by Dr. Ituarte, the immigration director, and from there we drove to the Department of State, from where a telegram was sent to the Cuban consul in Nice. Unnecessary to say, how happy I was and how happy Hedy was, when I had come home and told her the good news. We wrote, of course, immediately to Lisa, but letters took a very long time to reach their destination and we did not hear from them for many weeks. There came letters from them, but these were answers to previous letters. One day, I received a telephone call from our former landlady on the Malecon, who told me that a telegram had arrived, addressed to me. I went right away to pick it up. It was in French and what I could understand was that the visa had not arrived yet. I went again to the Department of State and showed them the telegram. It now turned out that there was a mistake, that the Cuban consul was not in Nice, but in nearby Cannes, and a new telegram was sent, this time to the correct address, and we sent at the same time a telegram to Lisa. Everything seemed to be fine and we had now reason for hope.

1941

CHAPTER 28

THE PARENTS IN DANGER.



But then came something that disturbed us very much, a postcard from my father-in-law. It was dated February 18th, 1941, arrived in Havana on March 6th and probably one or two days later in our home, and contained the following sentence: "But we see for us worrisome into the very near future, since we will hardly be able to stay here. We don't want to enlarge still more your circle of worries". We did not understand the meaning, and I took the bus and went into the city to visit some friends and ask them what the meaning of all that could

be. I met one man, whose name I have forgotten, in the street and he told me that the New York newspaper "Der Aufbau" had brought lately bad news, that the Germans had started to arrest Jews in Vienna in great numbers and to deport them to Poland. I was consternated, crushed, and it was difficult to tell Hedy, when I had come home, what I had found out. It was difficult to console her, and I needed consolation myself, since I loved them so dearly. We thought that we had to do something that could perhaps help them in their terrible situation and I sent them a telegram, informing them that the Cuban visa for both of them are on the way to the Cuban consul and that they should get them soon. That was, of course, not true, but we thought it might help them. In our despair we wrote a letter to Mr. Max Bruell and asked him also to send a telegram that he had sent tickets for the voyage by boat to them. We had found out lately that he had really sent one ticket for my father-in-law, one only. There came soon one or two more postcards from my mother-in-law, with a few lines from my father-in-law, which were not very clear, but seemed to tell us that they were not anymore at home and somewhere detained. I also went to Mr. Agramonte, the man who had helped us so wonderfully with Lisa and Francis, but he said that he could not do anything anymore for me.

1941

CHAPTER 29

THE PARENTS DEPORTED TO POLAND.

Before I had left Vienna on September 30th, 1938, we did not hear about large deportations. When I was already in Cuba, I read about the "Crystallnacht" and mass deportations. But we never heard or read about deportations to Poland. Other refugees, who had read the "Aufbau", knew about it.

It did not take long that we received letters from them from Poland, from a little village, Kunow. We found it on the

map. It was south-east of Kielce, a big city, and not far from Ostrowiec, the next railway station to the East, and the next bigger city to the East was Lublin. We later found out that some of the relatives, which we had in Vienna, had tried to help to get them out, but could not do anything. They were detained in a school building in the Castellezgasse in the 2nd district for a week or so, and from there deported in cattle waggons. After arrival in Poland, the train had stopped in an open field in the area of Kielce and the people were told that they could go, wherever they wanted, and try to find a place where to live. So, the next village they could find was Kunow, and they found there a room, perhaps with a kitchen, on the ground floor of a small house. They could exist there only because relatives in Vienna like Julius and Antoinette Ziegler started to send them packages with food and all kinds of other things, which they could sell there, also friends like Mr. and Mrs. Welzl and relatives in Tchechoslovakia like the Landlers and others. The Landlers were arrested later themselves and deported, and so support from them had stopped.

My father-in-law had taken along a book "The teachings of Gothama Buddha", which he studied and which helped him to endure the sufferings with equanimity. But my mother-in-law was desperate and extremely unhappy, and many of her letters brought tears into our eyes. Here is the first letter, which my mother-in-law wrote from Poland, translated into English:

"My dearly loved children:

Kunow, April 20th, 1941

You would not have dreamed about it that I would write to you from such a summer resort! Besides, both of us were cowardly and did not want to write, but Minny, who like all the other

relatives there are our good angels, was right when she said that you would prefer a direct letter from us. So, all the love-efforts were for nothing! You could not imagine what Julius, Feldmanns, Neustadts, Terry had tried to do for us. If we only would have sent telegrams two weeks earlier! We hesitated thinking that you would be hindered in your exertions for Lisa. Now we don't know anything about Lisa and Franzerl! I have before me your letter of March 17th. Can you imagine my feelings? Instead of being closer to you, we are now so much farther! We have written to the Northgerman Lloyd in Krakau and have described our momentary situation and also what we possess for our emigration. In the meantime, the beloved good Papa got sick. It is now 14 days that he is in bed. One night he woke up and lamented that he had angina pectoris. I think he had also taken too many sleeping tablets. I asked immediately for the Polish doctor to come. He prescribed medicines for 20 zlotys. He said he had high blood pressure etc. I think the anguish had caused it. After that there developed inflammatory areas in the lungs. He had fever up to 38 - 39 degrees. Two days ago it subsided, but an enormous weakness started, and he declined any nourishment. I am taking him every day out of the bed. Yesterday, suddenly, a kind of vomiting and diarrhoea started. The diarrhoea did not last long, but what he vomited was black. But now, thanks God, the vomiting has also stopped, but he is very apathetic. Fortunately, Karl Neustadt had sent him two oranges, which I have given him just now as juice and he drank it with eagerness. Hopefully, he will not vomit again. I can not tell how all help us, how good all Tchechoslovakian relatives, Hugo Husserl, Julius, are to us. There would not

have been any possibility to live! But dear Papa was very unhappy that all relatives had such expenses. Karl Neustadt made special efforts. There is hardly a day that he does not send something. May God reward them for it on their children. Do you know, dear Adolph, how different it would have been, his sick-bed, if you would have been at his side? The doctor did not accept any payment, but he does not come if not called. Not like Papa, who used to come several times to see how the patient was, and instead of prescribing would have helped himself. With us was also a Dr. Jung, whom I had asked once to come (9 Kilometers), who stayed over night and gave a few injections, among others also Coramin. It seemed to have had a good effect, but all the medicines were bought for nothing, since he did not take anything, and Nitroglycerin was also unnecessary, since he did not have anymore an attack of angine pectoris. Now I only wish that he should get stronger again, otherwise I would be completely forsaken. Sometimes he made the bed dirty, then he was very unhappy. The straw mattress he dislikes very much, although I had covered it with all the blankets, which I have, but he always smells straw. But I have it, thanks God, good, since I am getting many love-parcels, and the people are considerate and leave us the room at least for the night, while the others are 6 to 8 in one room. And they help me also with the kitchen, though I buy everything myself. There are young daughters; one of them got one pair of gloves, one a pair of stockings etc. These are here valuables. And now, my dear good children, I would like to know, what the situation is with Lisa and Franzerl; if they would only be with you already! That worried dear Papa also very much. Perhaps you are already in

New York? You are right, dear Adolph, that the thought of tearing away Franzerl from Lisa and to let him travel alone such a long way (even with somebody accompanying him) excited me very much. But how manage it? The main thing, you would all be together again. Unfortunately, the weather is opposite to yours. Mrs. Runes has us on her conscience. If she would have sent the things in September or October! I am glad, dear Adolph, that you are having news about your Mama. Unfortunately, I can not write to her. You can not do enough for Minny and Grete. I can not say enough what they do for us. So, for instance, we received today for Papa apples and oranges from Karl, also other things. How is the situation with the liftvan? Now I don't know anything anymore. Joszi met Lisa in Nizza. I also don't know anything about Heini and Susi. Hans (John Forster) does a lot for them (Joszi and family), sends money and tries to get them over to him. Very oppressing is also the fate of Raymond. - The utterances of Hannerl were always a great pleasure for us, unfortunately, Papa could not read your letter yet. May God help you and let you live happily with the lovely sweet children in peace. Think also of Lisa and help her always. She had done for Franzerl more than a mother. Never can one be thankful enough for that. If she would only once find happiness for herself! How we would have loved to partake on the happiness of our children; it was not meant for us. I am writing badly, because we Viennese have been vaccinated against typhoid fever, and now the arm hurts a little. Embracing and kissing you three, your dearly loving Mother.

May 2, 1941. Today I received this letter of your mother via Hugo Husserl, to be sent to you. On account of very little

space I can only send you kind greetings. I will write to you soon. After the last message of April 25th, Papa is feeling better.

Your Julius."

It was their and our great misfortune that all that came so suddenly, that they were deported with one of the first transports. A few weeks more and we would have saved them too. It was at the time when I got the visas for Lisa and Francis for Cuba or shortly before that they were detained. Unfortunately, they hesitated, while they already knew that they will be deported, to send us a telegram telling us that they were in danger. They hesitated because they thought that I would not proceed with the same effort in my endeavours for Lisa and Francis. That is what they wrote us from Poland. They were so wrong. I would have used other ways separately for them, perhaps through Dr. Vieta, the owner of the laboratory at which I worked, and Dr. Ituarte directly, by showing them their telegram. They would have been saved. Instead, they sent us a postcard, which took more than two weeks to reach us, and they did not write clearly what their situation was. That was terrible and cost them their lives.

Only now, after more than 20 years, by reading a book, whose title is "Zu wenig Gerechte" (Too few just people) by a Viennese lady, Erika Weinzierl, which Lisl gave me in Australia, had I found out how and by whom the deportation of the Viennese Jews was planned and with great precision executed. Mrs. Erika Weinzierl, a Christian, had written a diary during the entire period of the occupation of Austria by the Germans in great detail. She was one of the few who had helped in many ways some of the Jews to survive and was later greatly honored in Israel

by the Israeli government.

What I want to bring here are short excerpts of the chapter in which she described the deportation of the Jews. At the beginning of that chapter she mentions that Adolf Hitler in his book "Mein Kampf" had said "12,000 scoundrels (he meant the Jews) eliminated at the right time would perhaps save the lives of one million orderly, for the future valuable Germans." The plan of a reservation for Jews was first mentioned by Alfred Rosenberg in February 1939 in a press conference. He thought that Madagascar would be a good place. But soon, after the occupation of Poland, an area in Poland was regarded as more suitable, an area south of Lublin, on account of its swampy character. This alone would decimate the Jews, as the governor Schmidt explained to the Austrian "Anschlusskanzler" Arthur Seyss-Inquart at the occasion of an inspection tour in November 1939. The preparations for the transports of 1941 started in fall of 1940. On October 2nd, in a conference in the headquarters of the Fuehrer and in his presence, the Viennese Reichsstatthalter Baldur von Schirach asked the general-governor Dr. Hans Frank to take care of the 50,000 Jews who were still in Vienna. But Frank rejected that as unworkable. Hitler decided then that all the Jews who were still in Vienna should be acceleratedly deported to Poland on account of the scarcity of lodgings in Vienna. As the leader of these transports Adolf Eichmann was installed. The leader of the Israelitische Kultusgemeinde, Dr. Loewenherz, was notified by the Gestapo on February 1st, 1941 that on the 15th and 19th of February and from then on every following Wednesday transports of 1000 Jews would have to leave for Poland and that 10,000 would have to leave

till May 1941. The selection of the people to be deported was an obligation of Dr. Loewenherz, the leader of the Israelitische Kultusgemeinde. Later on, other methods were used to accelerate the process. As the Jews lived in different districts in Vienna and it was time-consuming to gather them for the transports, they ordered them, one day, to leave their apartments within one or two days and move into a certain area of the 2nd district, where they were crowded into already over-crowded houses, from where they could be taken out faster to be sent away in transports, and they took them in alphabetical order, instead of selecting them one by one.

They had them there like in a concentration camp, under constant guard and strict rules. This horrendous story is well described by Antoinette Ziegler, the wife (now widow) of Julius Ziegler, in an essay, which she called "Konzentrationslager Leopoldstadt" (concentration camp Leopoldstadt), which I am attaching to this biography, in order to show the younger generation what these people endured, what was once possible in this world.

From February 15th till March 12th, 1941, 5021 Viennese Jews were deported with only as much luggage as they could carry themselves. They came into small Polish cities and villages, where there was nothing prepared for housing and nourishment. They had at first to sleep in synagogues and emergency quarters on straw, before they could find room in the overfilled small houses of the villages. Food was very expensive. They all had to wear on their arms signs with the star of Zion, and the houses, where they stayed, had the doors painted red.

This was the situation our dear parents found in Kunow.

Shortly after their arrival there and settling in a small apartment, consisting of one room and perhaps also a kitchen, my father-in-law got very sick, and my mother-in-law described very well what had happened. As I see it, it was a heart attack, as my father-in-law had suddenly severe pains and said that it was angina pectoris. And my mother-in-law said that it was caused by anguish. The pulmonary symptoms with high fever which followed may have been caused by pulmonary embolism, as it is often seen in cases of coronary thrombosis, but may just as well have been simply a pneumonia, perhaps a lobar pneumonia, since there was a rather sudden drop of the temperature. It was a dangerous situation and it was the devoted nursing of my mother-in-law that he survived. There was a long period of weakness which followed.

I have a great collection of letters from them, written during the next year and a half, which I will attach to this biography to be translated later, as doing it now would interrupt for too much time my continuation of the writing of the biography. But I intend to translate later all of them, if I will live long enough. But I will bring here the translations of at least two of them, to show how they lived there, how their thoughts were always with us, their worries, longing, hopes, and fears, my father-in-law showing more firmness, applying his buddhistic philosophy to everything that happened, but my mother-in-law often unable to restrain herself, due to her fine, tender nerves, her goodness, her heart full of love.

First a letter written on the 11th of July, 1941, by my father-in-law:

"Dearest children, dear Adolph, dear Hedy, most beloved

Hannerl, and if they are already there with you, dearest Lisa, and Franzerl, and if not yet for when are there the prospects that you will have them there with you and what are your further plans and chances? The globe continues circling, undisturbed by human destinies on its surface, around its axis in its yearly orbit around the sun. The cosmos is unalterable and eternal, the bustle of life of men arrogant and transient, good luck and bad luck transitory. One has to be firm. You have passed the test well, withstood with toughness. You are still young, have life still before you. I am at the limit of life, my longing and the purpose of my life is only to see you again. Perhaps we will have good luck and it will happen. I have, in spite of my high age, withstood the worst insult of a so-called evacuation from Vienna to Poland. The weakness and tiredness of thinking which had come over me has given way, thanks to the sacrifice and nursing, which your mother conferred to me. Our chances of returning to Vienna and further the re-union with you depend upon the developments in the world. You should be grateful that you are far away from political disturbances and could see much of the world. A good fate may steer the further way of life of all of you. So long, my dear children. I embrace you and kiss you in my mind across the ocean and half the globe. Write to dear Erich. Report about all of you.

In hot love, your Papa."

And on the same day this letter of mother:

"My dearly loved children:

It would be nice if Lisa and Franzerl would already be with you. There is not much to report about us. We are well and there is summer here, which is for us very pleasant. But I

took the risk and jumped into uncertainty - I rented a small room for the two of us. The desire to be once again alone, drove us to that. But I am enjoying so much sympathy that I can return any time, as I was assured in many love-declarations. For here, you can not imagine what it means! Now I want to confirm that the package, which you had sent to us, has arrived, undamaged, and at the right time since Papa loves the coffee now more than ever before, and our coffee had just come to an end. We are well, thanks to the loved-ones and since we are alone, still better. Unfortunately, we have lately very few news from you and also from Lisa. We think more of you than we talk, because that I can only with tears. Instead of coming close to you, we got further away. I had prepared everything and now we are real beggars, who have no home anymore, and that at that age. You will never be able to thank enough all those who helped us. Minny and Grete are sending almost daily valuable love-parcels, which sustain us, so that we can live, are able to live at all. Our desire is to see you again and to be able to embrace you. God may help us in that. Thanks to the endeavours of Julius and Rosa we finally got our valises after $4\frac{1}{2}$ months. Embracing and kissing you all,

your heartingly loving Mama.

Write to Erich."

I had not mentioned till now that my father-in-law had written, while in Poland, two scientific papers, titled "Analytic des All" (Analysis of the universe) and "Religionsweg der Menschheit" (Mankinds path to religion), filling great many pages. These are astonishing papers, which he had started to write in Vienna and taken along, written on very bad paper

and sent to Julius, who had re-written them and sent to us after the war. I had asked Paul Bruell in Boston to translate them into English, which he did, an excellent job, and they will be attached to the biography. These papers show, perhaps more than anything else, what a great person my father-in-law was.

I also had not mentioned yet that I had offered our parents several times, when they were still in Vienna, that I will try to get Cuban visas for them. But they declined and wrote that they will stay behind until Lisa and Francis were out of France. They did not seem to realize that they were in great danger in Vienna, and we were not aware of it. Even when they knew that they will be deported, they wrote it on postcards, and it took more than 14 days to get to Cuba, and at that time they were already detained. The relatives there and in Tchechoslovakia made great efforts to get them free, but it was too late. Even if they would have accepted my offer of help, it would have been extremely difficult for me to do anything for them, because a sum of over \$ 6.000.- was necessary to get the papers for 2 people, for each person \$ 500.- as landing deposit, \$ 2.000.- as bank deposit, and an amount of about \$ 500.- for the return trip, also as deposit. That was an astronomic amount for me at that time. Were it not for the miraculous appearance of Mr. Agramonte at the right time (a little later would have been too late, on account of the conditions in France), I would not have been able to save Lisa and Francis either. I may have had to go again to Dr. Ituarte, the director of the Immigration Department, for a visa for Lisa also, and he would probably have complied, since it was still

my child that had to be saved. But the parents declined, and neither they themselves nor we in Cuba were aware at that time that they were in great danger. A few months later, it was a different story and then it was too late. When I got the visas for Lisa and Francis through Mr. Agramonte, it was in March of 1941 and at that time the parents were already detained and a few days later deported.

We were not sure for quite some time what had really happened to them. There was no mail for a few weeks and we had to fear the worst. They were in Poland already for a few weeks, my father-in-law very ill, when my mother-in-law, encouraged by Minny Landler, wrote us the truth. This first letter, dated April 20th, 1941, arrived in Cuba probably in the 2nd week of May. These were many exciting weeks for us, ending with quite a shock, when the sad news came out, and on top of everything the serious illness of father. Now we had at least an address where to write.

1941

CHAPTER 30

LISA'S AND FRANCIS' ARRIVAL IN CUBA.

This was the time when we had the worries about Lisa's and Francis' visas and then their transportation. We were very impatient and it seemed to us that they were not acting fast enough. But in reality they had gotten in touch with the organization Hicem in Marseille, which had to make all the necessary arrangements and also paid for the voyage. It took a few months, hectic months for them and exciting months for us, till they could get on the boat in Lisbon. It meant for them: Leaving Paul behind, travelling through Spain and Portugal, all kinds of complications, like losing a part of the baggage, but getting it back the next day, a sickness of Francis in Lisbon, missing a boat, but getting onto another one.

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del dorso que se aceptan por el presente:

HORA

PALABRAS

IMPORTE

NLT ZIEGLER 5 AVENUE GLORIA

NICE

VISUM ERLIEGT CUBANISCHEN KONSULAT NICE BERNSTEIN BEAUFTRAGTE

HICEN MARSEILLE RASCHESTE DURCHFUEHRUNG BESCHLEUNIGET FRANZIS

ABREISE DRANTET MALECON 507

HEDI

Nombre y Dirección del Expedidor: **TECHNER, AVE 7 ENTRE 11 Y 12, AMPL. ALMENDARES**

Here are a number of telegrams, which were sent to Lisa in Nice and by her to us in Havana. Due to a mistake by the Cuban State Department the first telegram never reached the Cuban consulate, as the consulate was in Cannes and not in Nice. That mistake was corrected by another telegram to Cannes.

Cuban All America Cables

Commercial Cable Co. of Cuba

ANTES

INDIQUESE CON UNA "X" LA CLASE DE SERVICIO DESEADO	
ORDINARIO A TARIFA INTEGRA	ORDINARIO EN CLAVE ICDE
URGENTE	URGENTE EN CLAVE ICDE
DIFERIDO	CARTA TELEGRAMA NOCTURNA

SIN INDICACION AL CONTRARIO ESTE MENSAJE SE TRANSMITIRA COMO MENSAJE ORDINARIO.

Cuban All America Commercial Cables
Postal Telegraph Mackay Radio



NO.	
MM	
HORA	
PALABRAS	
TASA	

CUBA 226 ESQ. A O'REILLY - HABANA

THE INTERNATIONAL SYSTEM

TELEFONOS: M-9801 - M-9808

SIRVASE TRANSMITIR EL SIGUIENTE TELEGRAMA. DE CONFORMIDAD CON LAS CONDICIONES AL DORSO. A LAS CUALES CONSIENTO SOMETERME

NLT BERNSTEIN HICEM

RUA BRAAMCAMP 12

LISBON

VISSUM FOR ELISE ZIEGLER SENT CUBAN CONSUL CANNES PLEASE
 DO EVERYTHING PROCURE PASSAGES FOR HER AND SON FRANZ
 MECHNER EVENTUALLY VIAMARTINIQUE PLEASE RESCUE THEM
 HELP UNHAPPY FAMILY

MECHNER

PHONED TO DOMINGUEZ AT 6.15 PM. MAY 19TH.

FO 4914

MR. MECHNER

AVE 7A 11 12 AM AL.

Firma del remitente

Domicilio

OFICINA PRINCIPAL JETA TODA LA N

RADIOTELEGRAMA

SERVICIO TELEGRAFICO CON TODO EL MUNDO



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SISTEMA RCA

CUBA TRANSATLANTIC RADIO CORPORATION

AC CA 423 NICE 9 14TH 1020

1941 JUN 14 AM 8 55

LC MECHNER MALECON 507 HABANA

VISITANT NICHT EINGETROFFEN

ZIEGLER

1-03448

[Handwritten signature]

Oficina Principal: Edificio Gómez Mena, Obispo y Aguiar, Habana,—Teléfonos A-1156, A-1157, A-1158.
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RADIOGRAMA

CORPORACION

INALAMBRICA

CUBANA

OFICINA PRINCIPAL:

EDIFICIO "LA METROPOLITANA" — SAN JUAN DE DIOS 111 — TELEFS. M-9826 - M-9827 - M-9828 - M-9829

EL MENSAJE SERA ENVIADO
RAPIDO A MENOS QUE SE INDI-
QUE LO CONTRARIO.

CLAVE (CDE)
DIFERIDO (LC)
CARTAS RADIO (NLT)
MENSAJES A BARCOS

CHECK

NUMERO

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HORA

HABANA.

1575 41

NLT CONSUL CUBA

CANNES = FRANCIA

VISE PASAPORTES O DOCUMENTOS IDENTIDAD CALIDAD
 TURISTAS ELISE ZIEGLER NATURAL AUSTRIA Y MENOR
 FRANZ MECHNER NATURAL ALEMANIA REQUISITOS LEGALES
 SERAN CUMPLIDOS A SU LLEGADA A ESTE PUNTO RUEGOLE
 AVISE INTERESADOS 5 AVENUE GLORIA NIZA.

CORTINA,
MINISTRO ESTADO.

NOMBRE Y DIRECCION DEL REMITENTE (QUE NO SE TRANSMITE)

TELEFONO

RADIOTELEGRAMA

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SISTEMA RCA

CUBA TRANSATLANTIC RADIO CORPORATION

AZ CA227 NICE 21 21 1110

21 MAY 1941

NLT MECHNER MALEGON 507 HABANA

VISA FRANCOIS SUR PASSEPORT VISA LISA PAS ARRIVE HICEM
MARSEILLE PROMET AIDER BONNES NOUVELLES PARENTS
ZIEGLER

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RADIOTELEGRAMA

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SISTEMA RCA

CUBA TRANSATLANTIC RADIO CORPORATION

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LC MECHNER MALECON 507 LAHAVANE

VISUM ERHALTEN

ZIEGLER

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RADIOTELEGRAMA

SERVICIO TELEGRAFICO CON TODO EL MUNDO



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SISTEMA RCA

CUBA TRANSATLANTIC RADIO CORPORATION

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ZIEGLER

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Camagüey: República 91, Teléfono 2855.

I have to interrupt my narration here. I had forgotten to mention an important event that took place in the summer of 1941 when we had our great worries: the invasion of Russia by Germany on June 22nd. They had as allies the Italians, Rumanians, Hungarians and Finns, and attacked on a 2000 mile front from the White Sea to the Black Sea. It was an enormously exciting event, since the Germans were soon deep in Russia and seemed to be winning the race. For me there were special reasons to worry, since my family in Czernowitz was again experiencing an invasion, about $1\frac{1}{2}$ years ago by the Russians and now by the Germans, bringing them the terror of the Nazi regime. It was after the war and that means 4 years later that I could find out what had happened to them in the meantime.

Now back to Lisa and Francis. They got on the boat "Villa de Madrid" on October 1st and landed in Havana on October 12th, 1941. The whole story, their experiences from the time they left Nice till they arrived in Havana is described in interviews very well and in great detail by Lisa and Francis. Their arrival was a great day for us, the greatest in our lives. The greatest wish of our lives, crowned with success. Two great human beings saved, brought back into the stream of life.

They had to stay in the camp Tiscornia in quarantine for a few days, and we could not get near them, saw them only from far away. Dr. Ituarte, the director of the Immigration Department was not there, was in the United States, and Mr. Agramonte was there, but could not do anything, since there was no landing money deposited. We came then every day in the afternoon, brought them food, also shoes for Francis, since he had only

sandals. We saw from far away that he was quite thin and short and were a little disappointed. After a few days, when Dr. Ituarte had come back, they were released immediately and we could embrace and kiss them. There was no end of stories they had to tell us, and we sat with Lisa till late at night, to hear her fascinating story. There was plenty of space in our home, since we had four rooms now, after the Glussmanns had left, 3 bedrooms, a living room, kitchen, and a little shower room. We had to take them out, show them the city and surroundings, the beach nearby, show them to our many friends. There were now two cooks, and Francis had good appetite and soon gained weight. I made immediately arrangements for Paul's immigration. He had the \$ 500.- for landing money, and I had a good connection to the immigration department, so that the bank deposit was not necessary, and only a relatively small amount of money, which Lisa had brought along, was needed to get the permit.

It was a very critical time in France, the time when the German police worked hand in hand with the French police in the un-occupied part of France, and many people were arrested and taken away, like John and Erich Forsters mother with Erich and a few days later their father Jozsi also. It was really one of the last boats, on which he left France, which did not go anymore straight to Cuba, but landed in Casablanca in Marocco, where he was even interned in a camp for 10 or 12 days, but finally could leave and also arrived in Havana. Soon afterwards, Lisa and Paul got married in a quiet ceremony, and moved to a small apartment, not far from us. We wrote, of course, to our parents immediately, after Lisa and Francis had arrived, and they were happy, their prayers, their greatest wish fulfilled.

Interview with Lisa.

I was born on January 3rd, 1904, one day after my father's birthday, quasi as a birthday present for him. The only thing that was not perfect was that everybody was disappointed, since there was already a girl and everybody had expected a boy. All the aunts and uncles were disappointed. My mother who was very young, had now two girls and with a difference in age of only one year and $1\frac{1}{2}$ months. But, nevertheless, I grew up, and after finishing the public school, I went to the same lyceum as Hedy, the Beamtentoechter Lyceum, for another 6 years. It was not very easy to be admitted to that school, since they took only girls of high government employees, and, of course, we had to pay tuition fees. We learned there two foreign languages, French and English. It was in a certain way a waste of time to study there, because afterwards you could not continue studying at a University without ... having studied Latin. After I finished with the lyceum, I really did not know what to do. I was at home. I was then 17 in the year 1921. I don't remember what I did afterwards. I remember Hedy's and Adolph's wedding, which was in 1928. In 1929 I went to Paris to study French and stayed there for one year, lived in a little hotel near my relatives, uncle Otto and his family in Rue Lafayette. The school was the Alliance Francaise, a special school for people from foreign countries, and at the end of the course you had to take a test.

When I came back to Vienna, I started to teach French. I had quite a lot of pupils. Then my cousins Suzanne and Raymond wanted me to come back to Paris and I went there for a second time, but this time I stayed there only for 3 months and I stayed mostly

at their summer home on the Plateau d'Avron.

When I came back, I went to a Hotel School in Vienna, a very good school and I would have been able to work in any hotel and I tried to get a position, and just at that time it was more and more difficult for Jewish people to get a position in a hotel. There was the Nazi regime in Germany and the tourists who came to Austria were mostly Germans and they did not want Jewish people in the hotels. Besides, at that time, there was great tension between Austria and Germany, and the Germans had instituted a charge of 1000 marks on Germans desiring to visit Austria, thereby completely ruining the Austrian tourist business.

After the invasion of Austria by the Nazis things got bad and many people left the country. I had a special experience once. I was standing at the streetcar station, across the home where we lived, waiting for a streetcar, when two Nazis with the swastika bands on their arms came over to me and asked me to go with them to wash floors in the train station Nordwestbahnhof. I refused, said that I can not go now, that I was in a hurry, since I had to go to a lawyer. I had the courage to resist, because I was sure, since my parents were looking out of the window; and I don't know what my father would have done, if he would have seen me going with these two men. So, it helped, the streetcar came, and I went with the streetcar and escaped this ordeal. Soon afterwards my cousins in Paris succeeded in getting a visa for me to come to France.

One day, I went to the French consulate and there were 20 people or 30 waiting on line, and a man came out and said: "I am sorry, I have only one visa". And this one was for me. I was very happy, but I felt bad to go in and let all these people disappointed

standing there in the street. I packed then my things; my father had to go and get all kind of papers for me, to show that he and I had payed all our taxes. People told me to go to France through Germany, because people were much nicer there than on the Swiss frontier.

So, I left on the 30th of May, 1938, and I had a very good trip and arrived in Paris. Before I had left, I had tried to learn different things so that I could earn money, and I learned to make belts, and I made quite a few belts at home and sold them later, had brought them along from Vienna. They were made from strings, beautiful strings in all colors. So, I tried to earn some money with that, but my parents also sent me some money in form of retour-stamps and I got a whole package of these stamps and my cousins in Tchechoslovakia sent me also some money. I lived in the house of my aunt and I did not need much money. This was quite allright, till Adolph came with Francis.

Francis made things a little difficult. Adolph stayed only for 14 days, till he left for St. Nazaire to take the boat for Havana, Cuba. The plan, discussed at length over the phone, was that Francis would stay only for a short time afterwards, till Hedy would have gotten the American visa and would then pass through Paris with Johanna and pick up Francis. After Adolph left, Suzanne told me once that things would not work out since aunt Louise was very nervous. She had always tried to teach Nicole who was so severely mentally retarded to read and write and there was now Francis, 7 years old, who was so highly intelligent and could read and write. Aunt Louise got very irritated, screamed at Nicole and was very upset. Aunt Louise did not say anything, but Suzanne told me, after Adolph left, that it was not good for

aunt Louise and Nicole that Francis should stay there. I then got the idea to move after I got in touch with Fritzi Zimmermann, and we rented together an apartment in Robinson, a suburb to the north of Paris. It was a new house and it was quite a nice apartment. We were living there together for quite a while, it was very agreeable, and Francis went to school there. I earned some money with the belts. But Fritzi was pregnant and gave birth, but it was a stillbirth. Soon afterwards, Leo Zimmermann got a position in Caen and they moved to Caen.

I had to move, of course, and they had friends whose name was Wurmfeld, who lived in the Rue d'Atlas, and they got me a one-room apartment with a tiny kitchen and a bathroom. Francis went there again to school which was just around the corner. There we lived now, and at the end of the year at New Years day Suzanne invited me to a party. I brought Francis to my aunt on the Plateau, so that he could spend the night there. And that was the evening when I met Paul. From then on, we met more or less often, we went out sometimes, they came to our apartment and I cooked dinner for them, Suzanne and her friend and Paul. Often we went for dinner to the Plateau on weekends.

All the time, I tried to get a permit, which was necessary to stay in Paris. When the summer came, I sent Francis to Le Touquet - Paris Plage on the Canal de la Manche, south of Boulogne. A brother of Mr. Wurmfeld and his wife had an apartment there and they took care of children. I had to pay very little for Francis, because I had recommended to them a little girl, and they had other children who paid quite well.

In the meantime, I got money from my relatives in Tchechoslovakia and from my parents. They sent me from Tchechoslovakia

not only money, they sent me sausages and ham, which Paul sold. It was Minny Feldmann, nee Landler, and her husband. They sent it quite often and so I had money. When Tchechoslovakia was taken over by the Nazis, this came to an end. But Raymond, who was on a business trip, phoned me and told me that from now on I will work for him in his business, even if I had no permit to work. He had a place where he made custom-jewellery. I started to work there and I was told that when somebody came in I should immediately stop working and just sit there. All the employees there knew it and signaled me when somebody rang the bell and came in.

When the war broke out, I had to leave Paris. Raymond's wife, Lucy, who came from Reims, had friends there who had a shoe store, and they made arrangements for me to go there and work in their shoe store for a long, long time, a few months, and in the meantime Francis stayed in Le Touquet. Raymond and Suzanne wrote to me that it was too difficult for me to take care of Francis and that there was an organization, called OSE, which took care of children of doctors. At that time I got some money from that organization, about 100 francs a month, for Francis as support. They kept writing about it and I told them that under no circumstances would I agree to that, that they could not do that to him, since he was away from his parents, and that I will join him. Suzanne wanted me to give Francis to this organization, so that I would be free and that it would be easier for me. There were many children with that organization and very well taken care of, and they perhaps survived the Nazi terror. So, I said "no". I was very upset about this whole thing, and Raymond came to Reims and he calmed me down. They said they were afraid that I would commit suicide, if they took Francis away from me, and he assured

me that they would not do it. Soon afterwards I got my permit, called *recipicé*. I did not get one, I got two suddenly. So, now I was free to travel and I went right away to Le Touquet. I lived for a while with the Wurmfields, the war had broken out already, and then I got my own little apartment, since I had gotten some money from Ernst Husserl and Maurice Ziegler.

The war had broken out on September 3rd, 1939, but there was calm on the western front. The Germans were busy in the East with the invasion of Poland, then with the invasion of Denmark and Norway. We had during that time a very quiet and pleasant life, and everybody thought that the war was not bad and that it will finish soon, and they were not angry with the Germans. But on the 8th of May, 1940, suddenly the first bombs fell. Francis was sleeping upstairs and he woke up and came down. I was standing at the window and my knees were shaking, and Francis asked me why my knees were shaking and I told him that it was cold. I was ashamed to tell him that I was afraid.

Now, there was the question what to do, how to leave. That was the time when the the Germans had invaded Belgium, Holland, and Luxemburgh, which had started on May 10th. Some people left, whoever could, but I could not find anybody who could take us along. Once, there came a truck with Belgian people and I asked them, whether I could sit there with Francis and they agreed, and I was sitting at the end of the truck, with my back to the driver, and Francis was sitting on my lap, and I had a string and tied Francis to myself. So, we were riding and riding, and it was a terrible thing to see, English soldiers were coming this way, Belgian soldiers were going this way, whole regiments were walking in different directions, refugees were walking.

Finally we came into a forest, where we stayed. We had nothing to eat with us. The people took out some potatoes from the field and boiled them, made a fire and baked them, and gave us some potatoes too. Francis was sitting and looked up, as there were airplanes over us fighting, and Francis sat down and made a picture of it. The next morning, the Belgian people came to us and said that they could not go any further, since the Germans were already here. When Francis heard this, he started to cry bitterly. He was sitting on my lap and said: "Lisa, tell me it is not true, tell me it is not true, may be this are Dutch soldiers". People started to shout at me, how I dared to come with a child this way. But the Belgians took us back on the same truck, not all the way. At a village Etaples they let us out, and there was an inn and I went there and asked whether I could sleep there. She said no, she had no room. But she saw that I was so desperate and said that some people will leave today and I can get the room, but that she could not give me fresh bed sheets, and that we had to sleep as it is. Then we were sitting down and they brought us something to eat, and we could not eat, because it was very fat.

At the table, next to us, there were some Viennese soldiers sitting and I told Francis: "You don't talk German, you don't understand it", and it was very hard for us. The whole area was already occupied by the Germans. One man said to another one: "How many miles do you think it is to the Stephansplatz (in Vienna) from here?". And we were sitting there and one soldier turned to me and said: "Miss, why do you have such sad eyes, why do you look so sad?" in German. And I did not react. Then we went up to the room. The next day, there was an officer there sitting in a car and the people came to him and they asked: "Can we go there, is

it occupied?". And he did not understand and I went there and said that I understand some German, and I was the interpreter then.

We then started to walk, I with the little valise and I took it on my shoulder and we walked towards Le Touquet which was quite far. And there came a soldier and asked where we were going, and I told him and he said that we can't go there, because they are fighting there. "It is the zone rouge"; he told me "you have to go some other way". So, we went back, and some people said "You can get some bread, but you have to show your identification card". That we could not do, so I could not get any bread. And so, we were walking and walking, and there came a little carriage with milk, and I asked the man to take us along and he took us.

Finally, we arrived in Le Touquet and we went to our apartment, and it was completely empty, everything was taken. I had beautiful bed sheets, which aunt Louise had given me, I had so many cans with food, which people had given me before they left. And now, I had absolutely nothing. The landlady had taken everything, I know it. She was a mean person. She told me I could not live there anymore, but I stayed there anyway and then somebody came to me and said that I had dropped something, a card d'identite or a recipe. She had found it, and she came to my place and told me that she knows a Viennese man and she was in love with him, and he writes her letters and she answers him. But he does not know French and she does not know German, and she asked me whether I would be willing to translate. This was Mrs. Roi, the bride of a very, very rich banker. So, I started to write love letters for her, and there was also a Mr. Baer who had come to Le Touquet. And he told me that there was somebody, a Belgian

man, who looks for somebody who speaks French and German. And I went to him and he engaged me and I was selling cigarettes and cigars to the German soldiers. I earned quite a lot of money at that time, he paid me very well and he was selling watches too and every time when somebody came and bought a watch, he gave me some percentage. And I made a good business and the Germans came in and talked to me and I told them that I was here since a long time and that I am engaged to a French soldier, something like that. But one officer came always when I was sitting there on the chair. Once, one man tried to get fresh with me and he threw him right away out. And he must have known what my situation was and one day he told me not to go out in the street because they are asking people for all the papers in the street today and that I should stay in today.

Once I was walking in the street and a beautiful car with German soldiers stopped and one man said: "The moon is full, tomorrow we are going to England". That was true, that was the day they had tried to invade England.

One day, somebody called in the street that all Tchechs, and Jews, and Polish people should come to the commissariat and give their names. At that time, I was very friendly with Mrs. Roi and her children, and they had some servants and they were Polish girls. So, Mr. Roi decided that we should not stay there any longer and he would take two cars and leave. So, Mr. Baer was driving one car and Mr. Roi was driving the other car, and early in the morning we all left Le Touquet toward the South. It was a beautiful drive. We went through Rouen. I remember, on the way Mr. Roi bought some eggs and for the first time I ate them raw. It was delicious, they were very fresh eggs. Mr. Roi had

a house there in a village La Bernerie, on the beach on the Atlantic Ocean, not far from Brest.

At that time I was completely separated from Paul. I did not hear from him anymore. Before I went away from Paris, Paul had gone to Nice. But, unfortunately, he went back to Paris, but I was not there anymore. He was taken into a kind of concentration camp, on a race track, where they put them before they sent them to different places, and he was sent to camp Milady-Man. From there he was still in contact with me, he wrote to me to Le Touquet-Paris Plage, and, in fact, I got in Paris Plage the permission to visit him with Francis, just before the war broke out. And Hedy had written to us in Paris Plage that I can go to Calais to get the visa for Francis. I went to the police and asked for the permission to go to Calais. They told me that I can go there, they can give me the permission, but there are no bridges anymore, you can't go there anymore. That was before we fled from there. Nearby, where Mr. Roi had his house, there was an empty house, and he put us in there, me and Francis. It was very nice there, Francis was happy, he had a wonderful time, he went fishing all the time, and he ate snails. There was no school there.

We did not know what to do now. One day, Mrs. Roi came over and told us we should go to the priest, he will make you Catholics and you will not be Jewish anymore. But I knew that that would not help anymore with the Nazis, and I didn't do it, and then, when we heard that the Nazis are coming nearer and nearer, one day I took Francis and we went to Paris by train.

In Paris we went to Jaques Ziegler and he said that Francis can stay with him, but that I could go to a hotel nearby, he would not dare to take me in. He was afraid. I went to Lucy's apart-

ment, because she was not there, so I stayed in her apartment.

I stayed there only a very short time, because I tried to get a permit to go to the unoccupied zone, to Vichy. Somebody had given me the key to Lucy's apartment. I did not get in contact with Suzanne, because I did not know where she was, as she was already "under-ground". May be, I talked by phone with aunt Louise, who was on the Plateau, I don't remember. But she told me where the key to Lucy's apartment was.

I got the information that I had to be very early, at 4 o'clock in the morning, at the German commissariat to get in, or whatever that office was called, where they give the permits to go to the un-occupied zone. And I went there and there was already a very long line of waiting people. I went to the door and there was a French gendarm, and I spoke to him in French and told him that he should have pity with me, because I am completely lost, since I am here with a child and the father of the child had left for the un-occupied zone and I have nothing to live on. And he let me go in. Somebody had told me, when you are inside you ask for a certain gentleman, whose name I had on a piece of paper. So, I went before that man, and I asked him in German whether I could talk to Mr. so and so, and he asked me what I want. And I told him the same story, that I am here with my child and that my husband had left me, and that I want to find him in the un-occupied zone. In a second he wrote me the paper, and he said you can have so and so much money, and you can go. So, I went to the station with Francis, and we left. Before that, I said good-bye to Jaques, and I told him to come too. But he said that he had to stay there, Baron Rothschild is there, and he will help me. There I will be lost. I told him to try to come. But he said "no".

In the train, it was very disagreeable, as the German soldiers asked where we lived and what I did. But finally we arrived in Vichy and Lucy was there. The whole Alliance Israelite had moved to Vichy and so Lucy was there. The moment we arrived in Vichy, they gave me something like 500 francs, and I rented a room in a little hotel. There Francis got the measles. He was very, very sick. He had very high fever, I had to sleep in the same bed with him, and it was so bitter cold in Vichy that winter. Vichy was not prepared for a cold winter, there were no windows, there were doors, which did not close well and cold air came in between the door and the floor. During the day, I was sitting near him, and it was so cold that I got chilblains on my feet. I was always glad to lie down with him in his bed. I remember that he said in his fever that he saw grandma - he said it in German: Grossmama - that she was riding on a stick: "I see her, she is riding on a stick, she is coming here". He was supposed to be in a hospital, because he had a contagious disease, and he was in a hotel. This was another fight I had to do; I did not want them to do this to him. I had a doctor, a lady-doctor, and I explained it to her that they could not do this, that this child will never get well, if he gets this shock now, to be separated from me. So, she understood, and she did not report the case.

And we had nothing to eat. They sent us up something that we could not eat. There was nothing to eat in Vichy. Luckily, we got a prescription for milk, and I had a friend, Ilse Roth, and she sent me something from the country, and Lucy brought me also something, and friends of hers. So, he got well again, and at that time I started to correspond with Paul again, who was in Nice. Before, when I was still in Le Touquet, I could write to

Paul. There were printed postcards and you could write only by finishing a printed sentence, for instance: "I am here, how are you?" I sent him these printed postcards, and he sent me printed postcards. This was the correspondence that was allowed between people in the occupied zone and those who were in the un-occupied zone. This was done through Suzanne. Then, when I was in Vichy, I could already write regularly to Paul. But I could not go to Nice, because the Department, where Nice was, was closed, and we were not allowed to go there. Every Department in France had its own regulations.

But then it was opened and the moment they opened it, I took a train and I went to join Paul in Nice, passing through Lyon, where I met a brother-in-law of Lucy, a Mr. Werdenschlag, whom I knew very well. He came to the station and I went out of the train, he kissed me, and we talked for a while. In Nice, we first went to a hotel, but then I moved into Paul's apartment in the Rue Gloria No. 5.

Then there came one day a visa for Francis for Cuba, through the intervention of Adolph. We had to go to the Cuban consulate in Cannes. But I got it only for Francis, and I was supposed to look for somebody to take him along to Cuba, and we were looking and looking. Once, there was a couple, about to leave for Cuba, and we got in contact with them, but they refused. They did not want to take the responsibility, since it was such a terrible trip through Spain and Portugal. I wrote Adolph that there was no possibility to find somebody, who would take Francis along. We asked also the Jewish Committee, whether they could do anything about it, but they refused.

Then Adolph, luckily, succeeded - he described the amazing

himself - in getting visas for both, Francis and me, which were sent by telegram to Cannes, and we went there and got the visas. The trouble was that I had no passport. But, luckily, they put the visa on my recipice. While we were in Nice, we had a pretty good time. Francis went swimming on the beach, and he went to school there. We came to Nice in February 1941 and stayed till September 1941.

The fare for the boat was paid by a committee. When we left France, we had trouble on the frontier, because our baggage was not there, and we had to sleep over. Then the baggage came the next day. The place on the Spanish frontier was Pau, a famous spa, famous through the story of Bernadette. We went straight south in Spain and had to change trains in Saragossa. That was a most terrible experience. When the train came, it was over-filled, the people were sitting on the roofs and outside on the stairs. And suddenly somebody screamed: "They are putting on new cars" and I was running to these cars. I could not run, I had the valises. I was crying: "Help me, help me" and finally a man came and he carried the valises and we were running. We never got a seat, but we got in and Francis could sit on the valises. From there we went to Madrid, where we wanted to stay over night. Nevertheless, when we arrived, I took a taxi and we drove to the Prado Museum. When we got there, it was closed already. And I said that I can't be in Madrid without having been in the Prado Museum. We went back to the hotel, and we slept two or three hours. We didn't even stay over night. People in Marseille had told us to rent a room in a hotel just to sleep in the afternoon, to rest. And then, in Madrid, we took a train to Portugal. And what I remember about this trip were only the cork-trees.

In Lisbon, we went to the Hicem. I met there Mr. Reder. He heard that I gave the names Elise Rosegg and Franz Mechner. When he heard the name Mechner, he came to me and asked me, whether I happened to know a Dr. Adolph Mechner. I said: "Yes, this is his son". So, that was a lucky thing, because on the boat he brought Francis something to eat, every day. On the boat, we had nothing to eat. Mr. Reder was in prison in Spain, I don't know why, they found a letter on him, or so. His head was shorn, and he and his wife, both, were very upset and sick, and they let them stay in the second class. So, they got something to eat, but we were not even in the tourist class but down there on the bottom of the boat, on wooden plank-beds. Somebody had told us in Lisbon that we should buy beach chairs, and that we did, and some chocolate. I sent a package with chocolate to my parents from Lisbon.

I had met a man in Lisbon, who was Greek, and he was very helpful. He took us to a rooming-house, and I rented a room there. Francis was very sick, with high fever, and I put him to bed there, and had to leave. We had missed the boat, which we were supposed to take, because in Marseille it took long to get the papers, and we had to sleep over on the Spanish frontier on account of the missing baggage. But that was not a bad thing, because we went with a boat, which went the next day and that was the "Villa de Madrid". We did not sleep down in the lowest part of the boat, but all the time on upper deck on our beach chairs.

Francis got very sick and felt better on the upper deck. I found out that there was a wash-room, where you could wash, and I also found out that the marines had a shower-room. So, at 5 or 6 o'clock in the morning, I went with Francis, and we took a wonderful shower in the morning, and then went back to our deck-chairs.

The sea was very calm, and soon Francis was not sea-sick anymore, and we never had a storm. He was very upset and he cried, when he said that we are leaving the land, and that Paul was not there. But the rest of our voyage was rather nice, and we arrived well in Havana.

A great event took place on the war scene, the attack at Pearl Harbor by Japan, on Dec, 7th, 1941, and the entering of the United States into the war. It meant expansion of the war over all of South-East Asia, involving the Philippines, the Netherlands East-Indies, Malaya, Singapore, Burma, and the threat to Australia, also far in the North to the Aleutian Islands, of which two islands were occupied by the Japanese. After the declaration of war by the United States, Great Britain declared war on Japan, Germany and Italy on the United States, and Thailand on Great Britain and the United States. The threat to Australia was later checked in the jungles of New Guinea and in the Solomon Islands. There were great losses to the American navy not only in Pearl Harbor, but later on also to the British navy at Singapore. There were sea battles at the Macassar Straits, at Midway Island, and at the Solomon Islands, where the Japanese navy suffered great losses, and it took a long time till the American forces under the command of general Douglas MacArthur won the upper hand.

1941

CHAPTER 31

MORE LETTERS FROM THE PARENTS.

We were all the time in close contact with the parents in Poland. We received letters frequently, sometimes via Julius Ziegler in Vienna, sometimes via a Dr. Wyler in Zuerich, who knew Annie Goldschmied at the time, when she was in Zuerich. I find it necessary to bring here some letters of the parents, to show how they fared during all these months.

First a letter from my mother-in-law, dated October 2nd, 1941:

"My heartily loved children:

Now, finally, you are all, except Erich, together! Wednesday evening, that means yesterday, we received a telegram

from Julius, bringing us enormous joy, announcing your, dear Lisa and Franzerl, happy arrival. Immediately, I imagined that I was with you, your being together, - with a little bit of melancholy. But the main thing is, thanks to your ability, dear Adolph, that it was achieved; and stones had dropped from our hearts. We are all right, the same as before, although we get now less mail from Minny, Karl, Terry. Fall came relatively early, although the last days were summer days. Two letters we received from you, dear Lisa, written while you were on the way. Did the young woman, whom you had met, write to her parents? Thanks God, Papa is healthy and again natty as before. Franzerl will be a little less satisfied with me, as I had gotten a little grayer. Unfortunately, we now hear from you nothing else, since you wrote us. I would be very interested to hear about the fate of aunt Betty and Hansi. From aunt Susi I got a very kind letter and a love-parcel. She learnt about everything very late. I also had to shorten my dresses and made narrower, which was done by the daughter of a seamstress, our former landlady. Aunt Klemi writes, how they all miss us. Aunt Elsa Z. has much to worry about all her children. We worry very much about Jaques. Lise Mueller is faring best. Julius got very nervous on account of the happenings of the last months. I am reassured by the fact that Antoinette is brave at his side, and helping him to withstand everything better. Marianne and Leon are hopefully well, and he can expect new progress. Now we are expecting your reports, dear Adolph, and what kind of effort will be necessary to get to the country you are aiming at. Now you have again your Franzerl, who is supposed to be a model boy. And Hannerl her

big brother. I have now to imagine everything that I would have loved to see and hear. I press you all at my heart, which is full of longing for you, and kiss you again and again.

Your Mama"

With the same date, a letter from my father-in-law:

"Beloved children, Lisa, Franzerl, already included. The quick, happy landing of both is first of all to be thanked to the energetic initiative of you, dear Adolph, but then also to the special travel-ability of Lisa, the excellently perfected travel agent. I would not have imagined as possible that accomplishment. We were yesterday, the day of atonement, all day long, abstaining from food and drink, in the temple of this place, with very primitive, for us strange public worship. I said dutifully Kadisch after my mother. It was the 75th day of death of my mother, your grandmother, and birthday of dear uncle Marcus. In the evening came the telegram from Julius, announcing the happy landing of Lisa and Franzerl. We were happy, our worries for the two during their voyage removed. Now we know you happily united. You can now at last press your dear Franzerl at your heart, after having been torn away from you for three years, post tot discrimina rerum, as it is said in the Aeneide. The youngster, with his 10 years, has really gone through and seen a lot, has behind himself a three-years Odyssey. Now he will be again guarded and guided by his parents. Lisa was doubtless an excellent substitute for you during all that time of his separation from you. The boy, already experienced in life, will now see a new world, a new fauna and flora. His proneness for natural science, as always shown, his talents, will now under the proved guidance of Papa further

develop and broaden. But it has to be done with moderation. It is one of my motifs "Much is the enemy of good". Thus, Franzl will, after having gone through a rough school of being torn away from the parents, be able to take the quiet, favorable road through life. May God help! I can not comprehend, how Lisa could overcome all the immense difficulties of the voyage from Nizza to Havana. The description of the experiences during the voyage will be very, very interesting. We received from her already a report from Lisbon. It proves certainly the positive triumph and progress of humanity, that it is possible nowadays to cross in a very short time hemispheres and oceans, and that old barriers fall off. Be embraced, all dear children, in the mind, saluted and kissed from

Papa and Grandpapa."

Very often, when I wrote to the parents, I asked Johanna and later also Francis to dictate a few lines for them, and since I have copies of all the letters that I wrote to them, I will bring here translations of some of their chatter.

Here first a little note from Johanna from July 5th, 1941, when she was 5 years old:

"Dear grandmama and grandpapa!

You should soon come here. At night, when I am already lying in bed, I always pray for you that you should soon come here. And at the end I always say: Amen! Dear grandpapa, are you already well? When I get up in the morning, then I get dressed fast, and pack my things, and go to Hortensia, and they take my things and we sit and wait for the auto, and we go then to the Playa. There I play first with the sand and then I go into the water. And in the water I walk

about and I cower and jump like a little rabbit. We go home by bus, at noon I am already at home. We have many cockroaches, but Papa kills them all. Yesterday it rained very hard, and it thundered and lightened, and suddenly the lightening struck nearby, and I have a friend and I thought that her house will collapse, and I was very insulted. My friends name is Teresita Pina Esposito and she is a very good child, but she is a little naughty. When her mama says something to her, she does not hear, not even for a moment. But otherwise, she is very good and she likes me very much and still more Hortensia, because Hortensia is still little. Today, we all were at Paecht, that is a coffeehouse, and we met there Mr. and Mrs. Wechsler. I got there chiclets, which is chewing gum, and chocolate with nuts. I drank there orange juice, with a straw, and water, two glasses. Now I am finishing and I go to bed, because I am sleepy. Good night, and I will write more to you to-morrow, a long letter.

Many pussis Hannerl."

Now a letter, dictated by both, Hannerl and Francis on October 15th, 1941:

"Dear grandpapa and grandmama!

I send you many pussis. Francis and Lisa have already arrived, and we have again the telephone, before we did not have one. It is very beautiful here. Francis and I sleep in the same room, and Francis got a new mosquito-net, and Lisa sleeps in another room, my aunt. And in all the rooms the walls have been painted, and they have painted them beautifully. Francis has caught already many butterflies on the meadow, and I was already at the dentist, but he did not do anything for me, put only a little iodine into a tooth. I

was in the movie, saw "Snow-White" and the "3 Piggies". And then I saw the bull and the duck. For my birthday I got beautiful white, high shoes. And now Francis will write.

Hannerl."

"I did not write to you for a terribly long time, and I am dictating for the second time into the machine. Today, Hannerl and I have played all day long with the Matador. I have a crane, a truck, a railroad with waggons, and I have made a swing. I have come to Cuba with the "Villa de Madrid", and when the ship arrived, I was not allowed to go down. Lisa had thought that there was nobody there, but I noticed that Mama and Hannerl were near the grate and we beckoned to each other. Hannerl jumped high up when she saw me. I have read the birthday-letter, which you wrote to her and it was very beautiful. How are you? I am very well, as I have never felt in my life. Mama is very, very nice to me. I am catching here beautiful butterflies. Hannerl has started to save money, so that you will be able to come to Cuba. Hannerl is a smart, thickish girl (Dickerl) and I like her very much. I am learning English with mama at home, and I know already a lot. Write to me also soon again. Many, many kisses from

Franzi."

These little letters from the children were greatly enjoyed by the parents. We received very frequently letters from them and wrote them long letters, also Lisa. But after America had entered the war the connection was less good and we received mail from them directly only sporadically, most of the time via Julius. They led a relatively quiet life there, had no direct contact with the Germans, at least never

wrote about it, could take walks in the woods, as mother once wrote, and father could bathe in a river nearby. In this respect they were even better off than other Jewish people, who were exposed and harrassed by the beasts.

And there was for a long time the hope that they would one day leave that place and join us in Cuba. We also believed it for a long time and wrote to them about our endeavours to get Cuban visas for them. Not that we wanted to mislead them, certainly not. We thought that it would be possible to get the visas at the Cuban consulate or embassy in Berlin, and that the only difficulty for them would be to get the permission to travel to Berlin.

How wrong we were! We did not know then, found out later that none of these people, in the situation in which they were, deportees in Poland, could ever get out of that area. I wrote before of that devilish plan, hatched out in the Reichs-Chancellery by Hitler and consorts and executed by Adolf Eichmann. I wrote about the "Concentration Camp Leopoldstadt", but that was only one part of that plan, PART 1, and there were three parts. PART 2 was the deportation and settlement of the deportees in small towns and villages in that area in Poland, where our parents were, and then came PART 3, about 1½ years later, which I will describe in the following pages in detail, using also letters of the parents to explain better what developed.

Toward the middle of the summer of 1942 their situation changed, in the first place their food supply, as the relatives in Tchechoslovakia, Minny, Grete, Karl and probably also Terry were also deported, and nothing came from there anymore.

There were only Julius and Antoinette left and the friends Mr. and Mrs. Welzl. And in the second place something else, rumors, which were circulating and were brought to them too and alarmed them, rumors about things that happened to people in neighboring villages.

Here is a letter from mother to Julius, without date:

"My dear Julius!

I thought I can bring you better news, but instead the rumors get thicker about our further wandering. When it will come to that, I will certainly be more quiet. But the great worries about uncle, since they talk about separation of men and women, then to find the best of the few things one is allowed to take along! Unfortunately, we have no thermos bottles. Perhaps one can get it here in Ostrowiec. People spend the nights dressed. Karl wrote that they will travel at the middle of November.

Please tell Klementine, she should forbid energetically to write to her directly. I should send somebody to the post office to get the card back. Besides, his loud discussions; writing, etc. are driving me to despair. I am still going to mail the letter, am closing therefore. Embracing and kissing
you, your aunt Gina."

And here another letter to Julius, dated August 17, 1942:

"My dear Julius!

With a heavy heart I wrote today. The news or rather rumors are coming closer to realization with giant strides. Remember Miss Baj. if you want to know something. Just now, she is going to Zakopane; I am sorry as I would have needed her now. But she herself is frightened. I don't have to

tell you: don't send anything anymore. I want to thank you and Antoinette thousand times. You have helped us to make our lives bearable. What will now be with us I don't know. Perhaps we have a guardian angel. But I am afraid that my heart will not endure much more. My whole worry is poor, good uncle. What does he still have to endure, at his age? The redemption before is almost more desirable! Money we have, that will perhaps be the only thing that we can take along - if we get away, but it is possible that we will end up here. You will find out about it in any case. Let us hope you will be spared. Thanks to dear Klementine for all her love! I know how difficult it is for her, but she should set her teeth and endure. I would like to write more, but I have palpitations. Thank also dear Hugo for us, he did more than he could, and all the others. I kiss you.

Your aunt Gina."

I have a few more letters and postcards from the parents and I want to bring them here. These are the last ones they had written. After all, this is a family biography and the parents were the center of our family, the main persons. So, for those readers, who are not interested, there is the possibility to skip these few pages and go to the next chapter.

Here again a letter from mother, dated September 24, 1942:

My dear Julius!

Just now came your dear letter with letter from dear Olly. For these good news I thank you very much. After all, you are right, considering the fact that the children, and I hope dear Erich also, are all right, we should endure our destiny calmer. Unfortunately, it is not anymore like last year,

when it was easier to stay calm, but now the nerves are not anymore that strong. No day, no night is anymore like then. From Olly's letter I learn that she is corresponding with Hella, even very fast, since she already knows that you had moved. But she does not write whether she is also informed about our children. I would be so happy to know that Lisa is happy and well provided for. But I think I have now only feelings of fear! How can it be, if one does not have that anymore! Dear Antoinette seems to make even from a W - - burg a jewellery box? I thank her for all her efforts, which are more than that - You can believe me that I can understand that very well and each time I read it get strong heart beats. Your letter had this time the postmark of the 20th, and had arrived fast. We don't hear since a long time from Klementine. From Lise Mueller you also don't hear anything? That is the way I assessed her! From the nearby villages one hears about removals! Alfred wrote again; unfortunately there is now not anymore sending of packages possible in the General Gouvernement (Tchechoslovakia). Hugo will try to send him warm underwear. Did I write to you that our landlady has raised our rent to 100.- zloty? We can not do anything about it. May God help us that we will always be able to pay it and for a long time and that we will come from here to our children. We have now much luck with the weather. One can not really dare to prepare heating material. I again write the address of Suzanne: Marie Perin, 10, rue de Vignes, Plateau d'Avron, Neuilly Plaisance, S.et O. We hope that Trude and Dorly are well, also poor Jaques. If Suzanne gives any information, you will let us know. Many greeting and kisses to both of you, stay happy and healthy.

Your grateful aunt Gina."

An addition of a few lines to that letter from father:

"Our Best! We write in some nervous unrest, especially aunt, since there are rumors circulating about possible changes of domicile. I am taking that calmer and surrendering to destiny. Please confirm, dear Julius, whether you received my letter with addition for dear Klementine, and whether you are finding yourself troubled on account of our frequent letters. I am indifferent, despising all being and happenings. May God be with you as with us. With all love

Uncle Benj.

And another letter of mother, dated September 28th, 1942:

"My very loved ones!

I am thinking over, whether I should send you this letter, which I wrote one month ago - it is again very actual! Now it has been postponed, they say, for one month, but "with destiny's powers....etc." I gave various good things to Byha. One has, as one walks and stays, to march - for us it means death. Uncle is not able to do that (to run). One has to be quick and must not be old! The last day was almost our end. A miracle happened. Perhaps another one happens! If I would only have news from the children and others! I live on the Valeriana pills. God may save you from all that. Then, if you will perhaps talk to my children, tell them especially what kind of angels you have been for us at the time when we needed it most urgently - Landlers and Neustadt1 in the beginning - you at the end! Uncle is much more composed than I, but I am mainly so excited on account of uncle. My heart has to withstand enormous demands - I can not find repose. The other day uncle told me: "When I see the butterflies...", more I

don't need to tell you. Suzanne does not want it that one writes to her - M.P. is her housekeeper. Today there was once again no mail. From Hugo there should come a package from the 10th, till today nothing came. Please don't reclaim yours. Write to us how your home is. Is Dr. Mueller still there? Altogether anybody? What kind of floor did you have to have made. So, what do you think about a wonder? Greetings and kisses for you. I gave also your address to a neighbor (Volks-Deutsche), since she speaks German. She will have the things of Karl and Grete in case of deportation! (Schaffransky - Fri-seur).

Your grateful Aunt Gina."

Now a postcard to Julius from father, with same date:

"Dearest best children! Your exhaustively informing card of the 23rd received, many thanks for it. Marie Perin is the housekeeper for many years at the Feingolds. Suzanne lives in the house with her little one, and mama Louise Feingold, under the last name, does not live under the name of her former husband. I can not tell you more, since I have read the notice in the news about less stringent measures regarding your loved ones. Hopefully you will soon receive confirmations from them. Thanks for the sending on of the letter to Klementine, still more to good Antoinette. Since she wants personally to go to Mrs. Welzl: it will perhaps be quite a rewarding fall excursion. Thousand thanks for the extraordinary goodness of dear Antoinette. With a further letter to our children I take my time. We are in the meantime happy about the news of dear Olly via a connection of dear Anny. Perhaps it will be possible to use this way again successfully. Thank, dear Julius, the good Nitra people in our name for the forwarding of

the message. We wish them all the best, They may remain favorably inclined toward us. Dear Ernst should remember now, as he is putting so much effort into his work, my previous advice of treatment methods with cold water. In any case we beg for further, even indirect transmission of news to us. Dear Gina is on account of disquieting rumors out of psychic equilibrium, but there is now calmness prevalent. So, greetings from house to house, but not meant houses, firmly constructed like in good olden times. There will soon follow our more concrete letter, by aunt Gina. Thanks for all your kind care. Remain furthermore our safe retreat. Be heartfully embraced, greeted, and kissed. Uncle Benj. and aunt Gina."

Now again a postcard from mother, dated October 3, 1942:

"My dear Julius! Just now arrives your dear card of September 30th. I have to tell dear Klemi, that I am, unfortunately, already disinterested in things, which belonged to me. As I have let you know, we are preparing ourselves for a transportation with uncertain end! We have never given ^{Mr. Friedmann} nor could we give any messages or news about one of the aunts. On my behalf Antoinette should not have called Lise Mueller. From our friend Mrs. Welzl nothing comes anymore for a long time. The last two times came 10 more then dubble from Mrs. Fraenkel. I don't know anymore whether I had written to her. Perhaps she is also not there anymore. I also have little interest in greetings from Dr. Sz. A suit of uncle I have now sold, also a pair of shoes. I have deposited many things, which will perhaps be for you or the children, whoever it will be at the end. You know with whom. We live now so from one day to the next. The wonderful summer and fall days seem to be

gone. Today it is cloudy. I am afraid of the cold. That is after all the only permanent in me! Be it about others or ourselves! I will write to my sister Susi one of these days and burden you again with it. Kisses for Antoinette and you.

Your aunt Gina."

Added by father: "We are well, even materially in prosperity. Thanks for the noble letterpaper. Uncle B."

And ~~now~~^a long letter, written by father, difficult to translate, which he called at the end his legacy:

"My dears!

October 9th, 1942.

If one is, like I, already in the 9th decennium, one has under all circumstances and especially in our present ones to think of the end of life. Indeed, the thought of non-existence should mean nothing dreadful to someone, who is used to look at things like a searcher, completely unbiassed from his ego-circle, that means outside of oneself. Human life and ambition is something temporal and is, considering eternity and infinity of the universe, very void and transient. From such a point of view one is very sublime above the instinct of self-preservation, which is in every living creature inherent and organically imbedded. One goes easily into Nirvana, the buddhistic blissful non-existence, with unburdened conscience, as soon as one has been serviceable in the life of truth and goodness, having set aside aspirations of any possessions and with renunciation of the many sensual desires, in accordance with buddhistic teaching.

Should not rapid death be preferred to rooting-up of ones life, the distraction of all of ones different relations, and as a living being to go through the annihilation of all ones

ideals, especially the dissolution of mental connections with the world?!

In the last years of my existence, now condemned to idleness, in reality already at an old age, following a lifetime inclination, I have occupied myself intensively with a mathematical-philosophical theme, which I called "Analytic des Alls" (in English) "Explanation of the Universe") with special leaning upon the thesis of the thinker Ernst Mach, that "considering the innumerableness of phenomena, only short generally valid laws and all-comprising theories should be construed." It is there adduced for the sake of proof the eternity and endlessness of time and space containing energy and matter.

Furthermore, there is added to monotheism the deduction of eternity and infinity of God, that means his highest perfection, as anything more perfect, surpassing infinity can not be anymore. This perfection obliges one who acknowledges God to supreme morality, which means that he has, in order to stand as the very image of God, to keep his eyes parallel, as in presentation of saints; and fixed at infinity and not finiteness, sensuality, so that man may become God-like, but certainly not God man-like, thought of as affected with human attributes and impulses.

I have sent the detailed manuscript of my work into the hands of our good Julius, the "resting pole in the flight of phenomena" (des ruhigen Pols in der Erscheinungen Flucht), (after Schiller). Perhaps there will once be a possibility to send it to you for inspection, so that you may occupy yourself closely with it as my legacy.

Be greeted and try to follow my example and to set yourself

up as much as possible in my philosophical way of living.

From the nature sanctifying and closely nestled to it
all his life

Dr. Ziegler."

Father added to that paper a short letter:

"Dear Julius! Golden Antoinette! October 9, 1942

You are again approached by the suggestion to send on the enclosed letter to our children. Perhaps a sensitive affair. But I think that these philosophical contemplations, without any political or, let us say, real allusion, will pass the censorship. That is up to you. But I think that one does not have to be afraid nowadays. So, good luck!

All that is written in haste, due to the unrest and uncertainty of our fate these last few days. It is a kind of farewell letter, should be considered as a legacy.

Be heartily embraced. Keep cool. In love, your faithful
and grateful uncle F

Beni."

"I embrace you in love and gratitude, your aunt Gina.
Regards to Mrs. and Mr. Welzl. I think of them in love and
gratitude."

126 AB -
- Meine ungeliebten Kinder! Wir schreiben
dieses Heften in völliger Schwermuth.
Ist es nicht so, wenn auch nicht ob es
zu den letzten erreichen. Doch wollen wir Euch
versichern, daß wir richtig unserem weiteren
so. in's Innere schauen. Wir sind glücklich
es ist parat - daß Ihr nicht hier sein
und Gott hat mir geholfen, als es gelang.
Euch so weit zu wissen. Ich weiß Ihr werdet
alle noch recht glücklich sein, denn
mein ganzes Leben war ein Segen für Euch.
Der Gedanke an uns soll Euch nicht beschweren.
Wir hatten es bis zum Lebensende. Wir würden
besonders Sorge von allem Geachtet u. Gehört.
Ihre Bilder u. sonstigen Andenken sind bei meiner
Stammvaterin mit mir aufbewahrt. Dort wo ich
die ich hab. Wir legen unser weiteres Lebensziel
in Gottes Hand. Es ist möglich, daß wir nicht
d. v. H. X. sein 5. Fr. u. d. v. H. X. sein
aber noch paar Tage können. Es ist auch möglich
daß wir noch sehr viel alles mit Euch leben
und Euch besuchen! Wenn ich unsere Freude
so viel fröhlich. So lebt denn wohl
meine geliebten Kinder, laßt uns immer
am liebsten sein, wenn wir nicht mehr
sind - d. h. seid wie immer - ich war ja
so glücklich, wenn ich Euch alle glücklich sah.
Liebe Euch! Alle u. d. v. H. X.

This is the original fare-well letter of our mother, and father's letter on the other side. The translation of these letters into English is on the next page (page 362).

J. L. Man muss seinen Gedanken, wie aller
Brüder und Sorgen um sich andrer Seelen um
dem Herzen zu werden verstehen, im abgesehen
und angesehen. Es ist Menschen da sein notwendig,
verbunden mit zu machen. Es ist noch sehr
Gedanken, oft unsaglich. Es ist
gründlich

CHAPTER 32

THE SAD END.

We come now to the last letter, written by the parents on October 10th, 1942, mailed on the same day by registered mail to Dr. Julius Ziegler in Vienna, who later mailed it to us in Cuba. He wrote on the envelope: "Farewell letter to the children."

First the part written by the mother:

"My most heartily loved children:

We are writing these lines to you in great uncertainty about our fate and we also don't know whether and when these lines will reach you! But we want to assert you that we are

facing our fate quietly. We are happy - it is paradox - that you are not here. God had helped me to know that you are that far away. I know that all of you will be very happy, because my whole life was a prayer for you. The thought of us should not burden you. We were well off up to the end. We were in high esteem by everybody, especially Papa. Your pictures and some things of remembrance are with our landlady for preservation for you, and there, where Julius has the address. We put our future destiny in God's hands. It is possible that we will have to leave tomorrow, on the 11th of October at 5 in the morning, can also take a few more days. It is also possible that we will still survive and will see each other again! Then our gladness will still be greater. So, fare well, my beloved children, let us always be among you, even if we are not alive anymore. That means, you should never be sad - I was so happy when I saw all of you merry. Love each other.

Your Mother."

To that letter father wrote a short addition, consisting of one long sentence:

"P.S. One has to know how to rip out of ones own heart ones own suffering like all anguish and worries about oneself and ones own people, in sympathy with and in the face of, with human beings necessarily connected and at certain times still more increased, often unutterable grief.

Papa."

These were their last words.

I wrote all that with a heavy heart. I went for weeks through all their letters, reading all of them, taking out the ones I have translated and brought here, and by doing that I

went with them through all the horrors they had gone through till the end, when they wrote the heart-rending fare-well letter.

As I said already before, during 1942 we had hardly any direct mail from the parents and as their letters were mailed to Julius, we did not know that they were in that terrible situation. These letters, written by them between August and October 1942, we received much later and we were unaware of all that had happened to them. We were unaware of Part 3 of that devilish plan, as mentioned before, hatched out by Hitler and his consorts in the Reichschancellery and executed by Adolf Eichmann. These $1\frac{1}{2}$ years of waiting in Poland, of reprieve, were part of that plan, necessary to give these beasts time to build the gas-chambers and the crematorium in Majdanek near Lublin. Then, when that was done, they continued the deportation by going with special detachments from village to village to levy their prey, which they did with special cruelty. The people had to run and those who couldn't were shot.

This is not a fairy-tale. I have the proof of it, black on white, 10 pages of a letter, written in Polish by a man from Poland, Zbygniew Choroziński, the son or grandson of our parents' landlady, who was an eye-witness to all that happened there. Starting in 1976, this man wrote us many letters, sent by registered mail, in Polish, which we had translated, and which we answered in Polish. Each letter contained inclusions like photos of Hedy and Lisa, also Xerox-copies of documents like birth certificates, marriage certificates, and letters from the American Consulate in Vienna, etc. In these letters the consulate asked the parents for detailed information, how the sponsors who had written the affidavits would take care of

them when they arrived in the U.S. At that time, Hedy and Johanna were already in Cuba, and now we found out that instead of mentioning it to us our parents had written to Marianne Erdstein in New York, to get in touch with that Dr. Runes and ask her to procure that information and send it to the consulate. Marianne must have done that, but as we found out and know, this Dr. Runes never reacted nor did she do anything, although it was obvious that our parents would never had accepted any help from them. Our parents wrote in their last letters from Poland that Dr. Runes has them on her conscience. Now we understood what we never knew before that the relatives of Dr. Runes had really sent an affidavit and that was at about the middle of 1940, but it was probably written in such a way that the American consulate could have had reasons to doubt their sincereness, and had to ask for detailed explanations. These were never sent, although Marianne intervened. It would have been so easy to save our parents lives. If they only would have written to us, instead of to Marianne, that there was an affidavit and that the consulate had asked for more information. But they kept it as a secret from us, didn't want us to know about it, as they explained later, because they thought that we would, by trying to do something on their behalf, diminish our efforts to save Lisa and Francis. That was in the summer of 1940, when Lisa and Francis were in the Bernerie on the Atlantic coast, when we had no contact at all with them and were not in a position to do anything for them. Hedy and Johanna arrived in Havana on the 1st of October 1940, and had we known anything, we would have made efforts of all kinds, would have written to Dr. Runes, would have tried to get permits for

the parents for Cuba. I mentioned already that I had offered them that, but they had declined, had said that they will stay behind till Lisa and Francis are saved. I think I am repeating here what I had already explained before. Of course, they did not know that they were in such great danger, at that time, and when they realized it, in February of 1941, it was too late and still to let us know they sent postcards, which arrived in Havana at about the 18th of March, when they were already detained. Repetitions? I can not help it, have to say it again and again.

I am now bringing the sad letter, which the Polish man, Mr. Zbygniew Choroziński, wrote us, 10 pages:

"Dear Mrs. Hedy Mechner:

March 25, 1977

I returned from Lublin today and found your letter. In spite of the letter having been mailed by "special delivery", it arrived in poor shape. Until now not one letter arrived without being damaged. They were torn on their way here. I will contact the main post office and ask them to save letters in the future. I doubt the success of my attempt! I will enclose the envelope of the letter I received from you, with the stamps on it. Lately packages from U.S.A. don't arrive in Poland....the press here mentioned it.

(I was) sad about the death of Dr. Erich Ziegler. What did he die from? How long was he ill? Any children left? Thanks for the New Years card from you and your sister. Thanks for the family photo, it tells us a lot! I would love to keep it forever. If you don't want me to keep it, I will send it back to you. Great changes can be seen in your face and your sisters face, from the years of your youth....What colossal changes!! This is human nature, no one can avoid his

destiny. About the dollars you sent to me, I did not receive them at all.

I wonder why you did not confirm the receipt of the letter, in which I wrote to you about your parents' visit in Kunow! Perhaps somebody did not like the details I described in the letter.

I will now describe the sad visit of Dr. and Mrs. Ziegler in my town. Kunow is a small town. Before the war, we had quite a number of Jews here. During the war, the Germans transported Jews from Vienna here, most of them older people, whose belongings had been taken away from them. Your parents lived in the house we live in now. The house was my grandfathers property. He worked in a factory, and as a carpenter did also other factory work. Your parents received packages from overseas. Your mother used to sell parts of the contents of the packages, to get food supplies. Jews were punished if they sold for business; they were often searched, it often happened that people were killed. They did not find out who did the killing. The killers were protected and not afraid of killing.

The doors of Jewish apartments were painted with red paint. We helped each other with food supplies. They used to sell items of clothing to get food. We used to buy meat secretly for your parents and other provisions not too easily to be gotten. Your father was a man of culture, good brain, and he had a good heart. He was patient and tolerant and divided his possessions. He was very honest and devoted. He knew the nature of human beings as a great doctor and was always honest. Lately packages did not arrive in Kunow anymore from abroad to your parents.

Grandfather had hidden cows, pigs, and chicken. He had enough bread, milk, potatoes, for all of us. Your father helped grandfather in his illness, a day before Jews from Kunow, Lagow, Rakow, etc. were sent away. We knew about it! We were shocked and knew their sad destiny.

To refuse to move was impossible. The resistance of Jews was nil - they knew their hopeless lot. Your parents were very shocked about their sad future, - father protested - of no avail. We wanted to hide your parents, but father would not consent to such a step. He was afraid. He hoped Jews will not perish. Mrs. Ziegler refused to be hidden by herself. She declared she wished to die with her husband, instead of leaving him. She was loyal to him till the end. Before leaving, she said she would love to see her children before her death once more.

A special group of Germans, Ukrainians, and Latvians arrived in Kunow. They planned their action with precision, those hated bandits.

Early in the morning, Jews from areas near Kunow were gathered in the market place. Kunow Jews were told to be in the market place at a certain hour. The latecomers were shot! A Viennese Jew was lead in pain - strangulated hernia - by his wife. They pushed her away from her husband, crying with pain; they hit him with bayonets. He bled, so they shot him in the head. The possessions of the Jews were taken away from everyone. They arranged the people, four in a line. The people were scared, with a deadly pallor on their faces. We were not allowed to talk. If anyone wanted to go to the bathroom without permission, he would be killed on the spot. The older men

were not here anymore, they were victims before or worked in labor camps.

We were watching your mother saying good-bye to us and to the house she lived in. She was an intelligent, honest, and wise person. She left good memories! The Ukrainians, we heard, beat your father. Those who could not march they punished by beating them. At the station we saw trainloads of Jews in the waggon, ready to move on! They were thrown in forcefully and were being hit with bayonets and fists. A German would grab an infant, hit it and hit the mother who was hysterical.

People were packed in waggon without water or light, and no air. The farmers in the fields heard the screams, coming from the passing trains. Trains were going to Majdanek or, who knows, to Treblinka for killing of the victims by gas. Fate gave them unnatural death - Fascists killed and destroyed them. The world powers could not prevent these horrors.

Your last letter was in German; I tried to translate it. Write in German, but clearly, please. I dream about the city you live in. I wish I could see your city. I dream about your country in which you live now - U.S.A.

For a long time I kept documents of the family that your parents left with us. Did you receive my recent letter with some documents? I have great respect for your family, which suffered so much during the last war. I didn't know them all. Please write to me about them.

Best wishes (signature)."

After the war, a court in Nuerenberg sat in accusation of the most important criminals, who were caught, but some had

committed suicide, like Hitler, Goebbels, Himmler, and Goering. Many important ones had escaped and live somewhere under false names, mostly in Argentina or Brazil, and were never found, like Bormann. But one very important and perhaps the cruellest, Adolf Eichmann, was found, thanks to Simon Wiesenthal, who had an office in Vienna and discovered many criminals, no matter how far away they lived. Adolf Eichmann was one day caught by special Jewish detectives in Argentina, brought to an airport and from there by airplane to Israel, an enormous undertaking and success that brought protests and denunciation by the Argentinian government, furious comments by many other countries, which called it piracy, on the other hand admiration and favorable comments by other governments. Adolf Eichmann was brought before a court in Israel, where witnesses from the whole world, also delegates and observers from the whole world were participating and watching. Adolf Eichmann was there in a glass cage and had to defend himself. Nothing could help and save him. He was adjudged as guilty for committing the most heinous crimes and was finally put to death by hanging.

I am now leaving the story of our parents. They have died as martyrs, innocent victims of abominable hate and despicable baseness of men or rather beasts, who were adored by almost all the Germans, who were participating wherever possible in great crimes, disregarding love of humanity and moral doctrines, assuming thereby the guilt of their leaders.

For us, our parents are not dead. They live on as shining examples of all that is good in men; and with them the great many other members of our family, who were the victims of the Germans and had the same fate. May they all rest in peace.

A page of glory is due to the many relatives in Vienna and Tchechoslovakia, who were so helpful to our parents by frequently sending them packages with food. In the first place were Julius and Antoinette, who were constantly in contact with them and sent lots of things. The parents wrote that they were their 'good angels'. Again and again they wrote it. From Tchechoslovakia they got very frequently food parcels, from the Landlers and their two daughters Grete and Minnie and the husbands of these two, Karl Neustatl and Erwin Feldmann, and from Terry and others, as long as these relatives were free. But that came to an end, when they themselves were deported and sent to extermination camps, together with their little ones. There were friends in Vienna, Mr. and Mrs. Welzl, who helped also by sending packages with food and other things like cloths, handbags, gloves etc., which they could sell and thereby lighten their misery. Hugo Husserl, who was still in Germany and in danger kept contact with them. He later escaped to Switzerland and ended up in Australia with the help of our Erich and Lisl, the same as Walter Ziegler. They all deserve/praise and our thankfulness.

Antoinette, the only survivor, has reason to be proud of all the good things she had done for our poor parents, the only one who will perhaps read these lines.

A special page of praise is due to our beloved Lisa, who took care of our Francis in a most admirable way, when he was left in Paris under her wings. She was like a mother to him, protecting him in dangerous situations in the warzone as well as from some of our relatives, who wanted her to give up Francis, to deliver him to a kind of orphanage. She threatened them with committing suicide and only then they gave up. The most heroic step she made, when she took a train to Paris with Francis and succeeded in getting a permission to cross the border from the occupied zone

of France to the un-occupied zone, the permission given to her by a Gestapo-Officer, a most daring step under the prevalent circumstances. It turned out that this undertaking saved their lives. This comes to light by reading the chapter "Reminiscing" on page 632. This is one of the great achievements in her life, of which she can be very proud, but her whole life is filled with many more great achievements for which a song of glory is due. She is a great person and that is why everybody who ever came in contact with her loves her.

(More details in interview with Lisa on pages 344-J and K).

In the meantime, my medical practice had grown and I worked all day long. My fee was very small, but at the end of the day I had accumulated a nice amount of money, and since our expenses were relatively small, we could save some money. Very often, a few times a week, I took the children to the movies, for which I did not have to pay, as a patient of mine, a Cuban, always supplied me with tickets. We also had a nice social life, had friends whom we visited or who came over to visit us.

One day, a patient and his family moved to Mexico, and they had offered me to buy their piano for a relatively small amount of money, which I did. I had it moved to our apartment, without telling the children anything about it, when they were at school - they both attended an American school, Miss Phillips School at that time - and when they came home they were surprised to find the piano in the house and were very happy. They were both very anxious to play and were in the beginning almost fighting to get the seat at the piano. I bought music books and Francis advanced very rapidly, since he had still some knowledge from the time he had learned piano in Vienna with Miss Feucht. Johanna had to start and I spent quite some time with her to give her the basic instructions.

There came a time when we had decided to move to a better apartment, as our apartment was quite primitive, especially the kitchen, and very hot in summer. We found an apartment in Vedado in a very good neighborhood on the Linea, in a modern building. It was on the ground floor and we liked it very much. But we soon became very disappointed, when we noticed that a construction of a new house was going on right next to

our apartment, with a lot of noise from early morning till late in the afternoon. Otherwise it was a great improvement of our situation. Lisa and Paul lived very close by, and they made a living by renting two or three rooms and also providing meals for some of these people, a Mr. Adler and a Mrs. Gerenday. Besides, she had another flourishing business, baking cakes and cookies in good Viennese style, for which she had always had a great talent. Paul had a job in the diamond cutting and grinding industry, which was started in Havana by Jewish immigrants from Belgium. He had learned it quite well, did the cutting of raw diamonds into two halves, and earned a nice income with that. I should also mention here that Francis took piano lessons in Cuba with a Mrs. Freund for a few months.

We had the good fortune that Mr. Bernhard Reder, an old friend and schoolmate of mine, and his friend Mr. Lerner, a painter, lived nearby. They both liked Francis very much and started to give him instruction, Mr. Reder in sculpture, and Mr. Lerner in painting. Mr. Lerner visited us for months every afternoon and sat there for hours, while Francis was painting still-lives, making great progress. Mr. Reder had met Francis on the boat, when he happened to hear the name Mechner. He asked and found out right away that he was the son of his former schoolmate. He was then very helpful to Lisa and Francis, since they were travelling in the tourist class, where the food was very bad, whereas Mr. Reder was in the first class. Mr. Reder was a great sculptor in Europe, a friend of Maillet, but all his works were lost, after he left, stolen by the Germans. He became famous again in the U.S., showed his new sculptures in many exhibitions.

I should have mentioned that Hedy and Johanna had come from New York with so-called Re-entry Permits. Hedy had made out, shortly after she had come to the United States, a so-called Declaration of Intention, also called First Paper, in which she applied for United States citizenship. She had to stay in the country for 5 years, before she could get her Second Paper, the Citizenship Certificate. But there was a provision that she could leave the country during that 5-year period for 6 months with a Re-entry Permit, and possibly for longer on application for an extension of another 6-months period. But before the first 6 months were over, Hedy had applied for an extension for another 6 months. When we did not get an answer, we wrote to the Immigration Department and got a reply which said that her papers had been misplaced and that she will be notified when they will be found. We were extremely happy about it. We applied anyway every 6 months for an extension, by registered mail, of course. We were all together, had a relatively pleasant life, but still, I saw no hope for the future. I was a few times close to getting my visa, but the American consulate got usually only a few visa numbers for the Rumanian quota, but never enough to include me.

1943

CHAPTER 34

AN EXCELLENT IDEA.

One day, we read in the newspaper that there was a shortage of doctors in the United States on account of the war. That gave me an idea and I explained it to Hedy: I saw a chance for me and Francis to get visas for the United States. We had to make a drastic step: She and Johanna should return to New York, should apply for a hearing in Washington and explain our situation. I figured that she would make a good impression there and would achieve the result, visas for me

and Francis. Hedy got tears running down from her eyes, but she saw that I was right and agreed. I had at that time the money for their voyage and a little more for the beginning, till she would find a job. She knew there a couple from before, Michael and Amelie Rosen, where she could find a place to stay. And I and Francis found also a place to stay, with friends, Mr. and Mrs. Zobel, who lived nearby, and we moved there into a nice room. For food there was Lisa, also nearby. So, Hedy and Johanna left - it was in May, 1943 - this time by plane to Miami, where she visited Mrs. Wagner, and from there by train to New York.

They got a room in the apartment of the Rosens, who took them even along for a summer vacation somewhere in the Catskills. Hedy prepared herself very well for the hearing in Washington, got advice from a lawyer, Mr. Milton Pariser. He had told her to buy government bonds for the war effort, which she did, also to do voluntary work for the Red Cross, and she did that too, making gauze bandages for wounded soldiers.

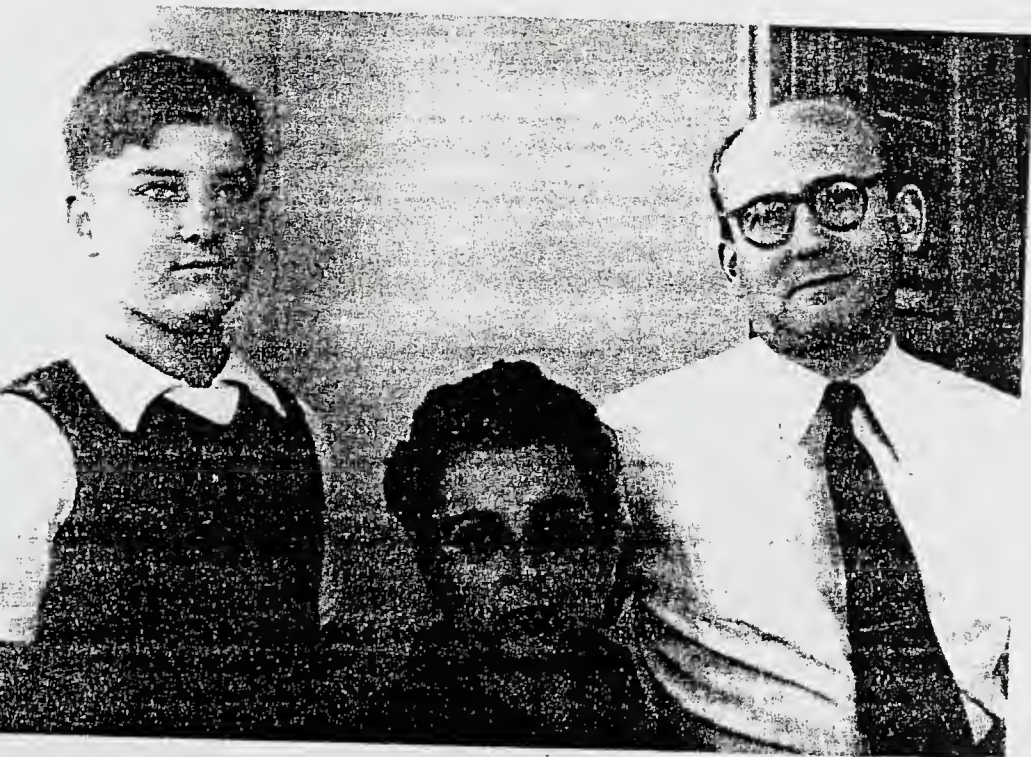
The day of the hearing in Washington came and she took the train. She had a paper prepared by the lawyer, but she had to do much talking on her own and she cried there too. She was asked about government bonds and voluntary work for the Red Cross too. The result was as expected: Visas for me and Francis, which arrived around Christmas time, and, extremely happy, we started right away with our preparations for the trip, which was not an easy undertaking, since we had accumulated quite a lot of things in over 5 years, from October 1938 till February 1944, among them two big display boxes filled with butterflies and other insects. For the last two days



Adolph and Francis



Lisa and Francis Jan. 30, 1944



Lisa, Paul, and Francis

out, shortly after she had come to the United States, a so-called Declaration of Intention, also called First Paper, in which she applied for United States citizenship. She had to stay in the country for 5 years, before she could get her Second Paper, the Citizenship Certificate. But there was a provision that she could leave the country during that 5-year period for 6 months with a Re-entry Permit, and possibly for longer on application for an extension of another 6-months period. But before the first 6 months were over, Hedy had applied for an extension for another 6 months. When we did not get an answer, we wrote to the Immigration Department and got a reply which said that her papers had been misplaced and that she will be notified when they will be found. We were extremely happy about it. We applied anyway every 6 months for an extension, by registered mail, of course. We were all together, had a relatively pleasant life, but still, I saw no hope for the future. I was a few times close to getting my visa, but the American consulate got usually only a few visa numbers for the Rumanian quota, but never enough to include me.

The following pages show a petition which Hedy had prepared and presented at her hearing in Washington, D.C.. Following these four pages is a letter of approval from the United States Department of State to the U.S. Embassy in Havana for the issuance of immigration visas form me and Francis to enter the United States. A great success! Another dream comes true!

The undersigned, Hedwig Wechner, makes the following statement on behalf of Adolf Wechner, her husband and Franz Wechner, her son, who are applying for visas to enter the United States.

I am a resident of the United States since my entry on December 2, 1939. The only time I left this country was on October 1, 1940 and proceeded to Havana, Cuba, taking with me my daughter Joan, to join my husband and son. I returned to this country on June 15, 1943. The delay in returning was due to the fact that the re-entry permit for my daughter Joan was returned but mine had been mislaid in the office of Immigration and Naturalization Service in Philadelphia. On January 26, 1944, I was so advised by letter and a new re-entry permit was issued. Since June 15, 1943, I have resided together with my daughter at 721 Carroll Street, Brooklyn, New York.

At the present time, I am employed by the United States Basket Co., 10 East 23 Street, New York City, and earn \$25.00 a week for part time work. I also do knitting and crocheting at home and earn an additional \$10 to \$15 a week. This work is supplied to me by Union Art Crochet Co., 1165 Broadway, New York City. I have approximately \$500 in savings banks in New York City and have already purchased from my earnings several United States War Bonds. My landlord, a Mrs. Rosen, takes care of my daughter Joan while I am at work and when Joan is not at school. Joan is at the present time attending a public school. I am serving as a volunteer worker with the American Red Cross at its office in the Academy of Music, Brooklyn, New York.

I met my husband Adolf Wechner in 1920 when he was a medical student in Vienna. He studied at the Medical University in Vienna for five years and received his degree in 1924. He served an internship in Vienna Hospital for four years and thereafter took a position as a

-2-

physician in the Sanitarium of Vienna, the outstanding institution of its kind in Austria. He remained in that position for two years.

In 1928 we were married and my husband opened an office as a practicing physician and also became a doctor in the Social Security Division. In addition to his activities as a practicing physician he occupied his spare time in scientific research. In 1936 he made an important therapeutic discovery. He was able to prove that snake poison constitutes an excellent and successful remedy for coryza. After considerable investigation and research he was able to demonstrate that the serum could be applied by rubbing an ointment into the skin of the arms. This discovery was presented to the Medical Society of Vienna, on June 19, 1936. A complete report and its acceptance by the Medical Fraternity is included in a statement prepared by my husband which will be submitted herewith.

In 1938, our situation became precarious, due to the developments of the political situation. At that time my daughter was two years old and my son 7. My husband took our son with him to Paris. On September 30, 1938 he left our son with an Aunt in Paris and he proceeded alone to Havana, Cuba, where he arrived on November 1, 1938.

On October 1, 1941, Mrs. Lida Ziegler, ^{Rosegg} the Aunt, who is my sister, and my son, joined my husband in Havana, where they have continuously resided. On November 14, 1939, I left Vienna with my daughter with American Immigration Papers issued by the United States Consul in Vienna and on November 24, 1939 sailed for New York on the S. S. Rotterdam.

Since September 30, 1938, my family has been separated except for the period of time that I visited Havana, Cuba. It is our heartiest desire and wish for all of us to be reunited and to start

life anew in America. The opportunity to live together under one roof as a family unit and to give to our children the advantages of having both a mother and a father would be the greatest blessing that he could receive.

It was only due to unfortunate circumstances that my husband and son did not obtain their visas in the past. On November 25, 1941 the American Consul in Havana informed my husband that he had received favorable instructions from the State Department. Two weeks later the attack on Pearl Harbor brought an immediate stoppage to the issuance of visas. Immigration applications were filed by Mr. Saretzky and Hubbi Hixon and the consular officials did not understand the meaning of the notices for a hearing and wrote to us in Havana. In the meantime, nobody appeared at the hearing and the application was denied. Thereafter on my return to this country, I filed the new application now before this board.

My husband and son are both in excellent health, and have never suffered from any contagious or serious illness. My husband is an extremely well educated man, having a fine and excellent cultural background, in addition to his medical training. My son has been well educated as a young boy and gives promise of developing into a fine upright man.

My husband would welcome the opportunity of serving as a doctor in this country. He brings with him many years of experience as a general practitioner of medicine in addition to his abilities and discoveries in medical research. He has always been in sympathy and accord with the Democratic principles of government. He has never had and does not have any sympathy with the Fascist form of government, and have never given support of any kind to the Nazis or Fascists. My

husband was never a member of any political group, did not belong to societies other than medical societies. He never took part in Political organizations. He has always been a loyal person and I have no doubt that he will give to this country the loyalty and appreciation that the granting of a visa to him and to my son justifies and deserves.

My husband is not completely without financial resources, and has between \$1000.00 and \$2000.00 in cash at the present time. This money he earned doing laboratory work at a pharmaceutical factory, Vietta Plazinzia, in Havana.

I respectfully pray this Board to recommend the issuance of visas to my husband and son, knowing full well that they will eventually become good American Citizens and show their appreciation by service to this country.

Heidi Weckner

New-York, Nov. 10th 1943.

Visa Form L-5



DEPARTMENT OF STATE
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

In reply refer to
VD 811.111 Mechner, Adolf

December 17, 1943

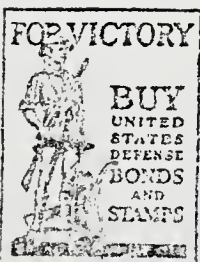
Mrs. Hedwig Mechner,
721 Carroll Street,
Brooklyn, New York.

Madam:

With reference to your interest in the visa case of your husband Adolf Mechner and son Franz Gerhart, I have pleasure in informing you that after further consideration of the case in the light of existing regulations, the Department has given ~~advisory~~ advisory approval for the issuance of immigration visas to the American Embassy at Habana. Notification of this action has been sent by air mail.

Very truly yours,

H. K. Travers
Chief, Visa Division



1944

425

in Havana I had hired a taxicab to take me to the many friends to say "good-bye". In the laboratory Vieta-Plasencia I had left a large amount of ointment for a long time to come and I told them that I would probably come over from the United States to prepare more ointment for them. The formula I did not give them and they did not ask me for it, since I had great plans for Viperin for the United States.



On Garfield Place in Brooklyn
on March 12, 1944

CHAPTER 35

JANUARY 12, 1944 - OFF TO THE U.S.

We took a plane for Miami, and our immigration procedure and examination by the immigration officers was smooth and there was no difficulty. I was pleased to be told that my English was quite good. After a stay of two days in Miami, where we visited our good friend Mrs. Else Wagner and where I met for the first time Mr. Spielmann, we took the train for New York, where Hedy had already a nice furnished apartment prepared for all of us at 408 Garfield Place in Brooklyn. I was overwhelmed already in Miami and then again in New York by the entirely different world, into which we had come, the enormous buildings, the well regulated traffic, the clean streets, etc.

When we arrived in New York, Hedy had a job. She had to paint ties, which were modern at that time, and she had to leave early in the morning and came home late in the afternoon when it was already dark. Johanna went to a public school, only a few blocks from our home, and I had to pick her up every day after school. Francis was at that time already 13 years old and we thought it would be nice for him to be put into the Ethical Culture school. We had already become members of the Brooklyn Ethical Culture Society, were introduced there by Mr. David Freudenthal and had attended a meet-

ing there, had met the leader, Dr. Henry Neuman and many members, some of whom later became our friends.

The Ethical Culture movement was known to me through Hedy, who in turn learned about it when she was in New York before she came to Cuba, through Mr. And Mrs. Rosen, who were very active members and had taken Hedy to meetings. What I soon learned was that it was a kind of religious movement, started in 1876 by Dr. Felix Adler. It was rather an inter-religious movement, accepting all good axioms of other religions, from Confucius, Buddha, Moses, and the prophets, to Christianity. There is no belief in God, in any dogma, nor in life after death. It's aim is "to assert the supreme importance of the ethical factor in all relations of life, personal, social, national, and international, apart from any theological or metaphysical considerations." Members of the society may have other religious affiliations if they wish. Much emphasis is placed upon education, belief in human beings, the belief in the spiritual nature of men, faith in truth.

We became very active members of the Ethical Society and still belong to it, 34 years till now. We enjoyed through all these years the meetings and lectures, many of them given by important men, and were tied to the society by friendship to many of the members. Hedy was for many years president of the Women's Club, later named Women's Conference of the Society for Ethical Culture, and I was for years a member of the board.

I said before that we thought, after we came to New York, that it would be nice if Francis would be put into the Ethical Culture school. But Mrs. Neuman, the director of that school, thought that Francis was too advanced and should start with a

high school. She got in touch with Mr. Mason, who was director of the Lincoln High School, and Francis was immediately accepted. The school was near Coney Island and he had to travel there every day by subway, which was not too difficult a problem.

I had to start to prepare myself for the State Board examination, which consisted of two parts, an English language examination and an examination of medical subjects. I went to work on that with great zeal, started at first to take English courses, which I attended about three times a week, learned also from a grammar book, and also learned a lot by reading the New York Times. I was most of the time alone at home, when Hedy and the children were away, and besides studying had to take care of cleaning the apartment, shopping, picking Johanna up from school, etc.

The English courses which I attended were very helpful and my English improved quite rapidly. I had mentioned before already that I had started to learn English as a young boy of 14 or 15, before the First World War, and later, after that war, when I met Hedy, who was taking English lessons with a lovely old lady, Miss Butterworth, I started soon also to take English lessons with her and continued for some time. When I left Vienna and went to Cuba, I took along an English-German grammar, an English-German dictionary, and an English novel "Ships that passed in the night", which Hedy had given me. That book was very helpful. When I started to read it, I had to look up almost every word in the dictionary, and it took an hour if not more to translate the first four lines of that book. The next day, I could already advance faster and

I read about half a page in an hour. Some words, the meaning of which I could not remember, I wrote down on a piece of paper. Next, I could already read and understand about 2 pages in one or two hours, and advanced then faster and faster in that book, till I finished it in about a month. I still have that book. Besides reading that book, I studied the grammar and advanced each day by a half or whole chapter, but always repeating the previous chapters, always covering either the English words and naming the meaning in German, or covering the German words and naming them when reading the English words. I did that systematically and acquired in this way a constantly growing wealth of words. I did all that, while I was in Cuba. I also was lucky when I lived on the Malecon in Havana to have a neighbor in the room next to mine, who had come to Havana to improve his Spanish, sent there on a grant from a college. This young man helped me very much with my English studies by conversing with me in English, correcting wrong expressions. I also had to read aloud from English books or newspapers and he corrected my pronunciation. We were together for a few months till about the time, when Hedy and Johanna arrived in Cuba. I am explaining all that to show that I had some preliminary knowledge of English when I came to the United States, so that I could advance rapidly and prepare myself for the English examination, which I took in May 1944 and passed.

Now came the more difficult part, the study of the different subjects of medicine, anatomy, internal medicine, bacteriology etc. It was terribly difficult in the beginning, since new words appeared, which I had not heard before, like the word thigh or palsy and great many others, and I advanced slowly

I attended classes, given by a Dr. Hirschfeld, a practicing oto-rhino-laryngologist, had to go three times a week to his office on Central Park West, where about 20 doctors, perhaps more, congregated for 2 or 3 hours. He was an excellent teacher, gave us type-written papers for each of the 8 subjects of the examinations, which simplified the studying greatly. This went on for 3 months. I studied day and night till well after midnight. I learned better at night, when everybody was sleeping. Once there was an earthquake in New York. I was standing, with a book in my hands, when the pieces of glass, hanging from a candelabre in the center of the room, started to clink. There was a piano next to me and I thought I could crawl beneath it, if the situation should become dangerous. But first, I woke Hedy up and she was indignant that I woke her up. Nothing happened then, but the newspapers wrote a lot about it the next day. There was only minor damage in some houses, cracks, nothing more. Hedy's reaction reminded me of a story often told in her parents home. There was once an earthquake in Vienna, and Hedy's mother woke up and told her husband to be quiet and ^{not} to move about in the bed, whereupon he told her: "You blame me even for an earthquake."

Hedy had a hard time, while I studied for my examination, having to leave very early every morning and to travel in the crowded subway to Manhattan for work, and, after coming home, to prepare the dinner for us. She even brought homework with her, boxes with ties, which she painted after dinner. That painting was done with little paper bags, filled with paint of a pasty consistency. The tip of the paper bag had to be cut off, a tiny little piece only, and on squeezing of the

bag a little bit of paint came out. There were designs printed on the ties, so that it was relatively easy to draw the lines along the printed lines, thus completing nice pictures in different colors, like flowers, sailboats, etc. I helped her with the painting, also Francis. The paint dried quite fast and in the morning she took the ties along. It was wonderful how Hedy managed to do that work and supported the family. But we got also some support from a refugee relief organization. When business got bad and she lost her job, we got a little more support. This way I could continue studying and prepare myself for the examination. I had it better than other doctors, who took on jobs in hospitals to earn money and studied in the evening and on days when they were free. I knew some, who were already 3 or 4 years in the country, had taken the examination once or twice and had failed. It was only possible to take the examination 3 times. After failing 3 times, one could not take the examination anymore. That happened to quite a few people. That is why I studied so hard, as I wanted to pass the examination the first time. When we had visitors, which happened many times, since we had a lot of friends, I asked Hedy to take them to the nearby Prospect Park, so that I could continue with my studies. On weekends, Hedy took the children out on little excursions, so that I could stay home and study.

Nearby, in the next house, lived our best friends, Mr. and Mrs. Glueck, whom we saw very often, almost daily. They were the ones who had helped Hedy find the apartment. They were at the end in an old-age home, died a few years ago, first he, Bernhard, 93 years old, and then she, Ethel, about

90 years old, and their niece, Mrs. Hedy Glueckselig, who has an antique store, is still one of our best friends, a good soul.

There came the time of my examination on October 1st, and I studied at the end all night and slept only one or two hours. Dr. Hirschfeld, our tutor, told me that I was very well prepared, the best in the whole group. The examinations were in writing, starting in the morning at 9 and ending at 12 noon, and then starting again at 1 P.M. and ending at 4. Each day 2 subjects, for 4 days. Each time when I came home in the late afternoon, I could say that I was sure I had passed the examination. After sleeping for 1 hour, I started again to study, ending at 6 in the morning, sleeping then for one hour and then getting up to take the subway to Manhattan, to get there in time before 9 o'clock. That went on for 4 days. After coming home on the 4th day, I went to bed and slept for almost 2 days, completely exhausted.

I forgot to mention that for the first summer Francis had gone to a camp in Pennsylvania for a few weeks. It was not a very good camp, especially concerning the food, but he seemed to have liked it.

During that summer Hedy had to go again to Washington for a hearing on behalf of Lisa and Paul, regarding their immigration visas. I was left behind to take care of the children. She returned the same or the next day. She was again successful and a short time later Lisa and Paul received their immigration visas in Havana and arrived later in New York, settled down in a small apartment in Manhattan, and both soon got jobs and worked.

When the new school year started, Francis had decided to

switch to Erasmus High School, since it was easier to reach and he did not like Lincoln High School too much. Johanna continued to attend the school on 2nd Street between 7th and 6th Avenues. I soon started to work, got a job as an intern in Crown Hights Hospital. It was a difficult job, since I did not only have to take care of a great number of patients, many of them post-operative cases, but had also to give anesthetics in the operating room. They did not have anesthetists at that time and they used for anesthesia nitrous oxide with an apparatus, which was quite complicated and new to me. I had to sleep often in the hospital, when I was on night duty. All that I did not like too much.

THE UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK
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ALBANY 1

DEC 13 1947

Dr. Adolph Mechner
308 Garfield Place
Brooklyn, New York

Dear Doctor:

The Secretary of the State Board of Medical Examiners reports that you have passed the subjects of the licensing examination. Ratings of accepted papers are not given.

A license will be forwarded to you as soon as possible.

A candidate does not acquire the right to practise in this State until he has received his license and registered it in the county clerk's office of the county in which he intends to begin his practice. He must also register biennially with this Department. Application for biennial registration should be addressed to the Bureau of Professional Registration, State Education Department, Albany 1, N. Y.

Very truly yours

H. L. FIELD

Chief

CHAPTER 36

SUCCESS.

On the 15th of December came the long expected letter, which told me that I had passed the State board examination. I was very, very happy and so was Hedy. For that occasion she had prepared a gift for me, a doctors bag, a blood pressure apparatus, and a fine stethoscope. I did not feel too comfortable in Crown Heights Hospital and switched with January 1st, 1945 to Williamsburgh Maternity Hospital in Bushwick Avenue in Brooklyn. It was a little more distant, but I could reach it relatively easy by bus. I had to take care only of women who gave birth, a field that I liked very much, and I stayed there for $1\frac{1}{2}$ years, had a nice salary and besides earned money from deliveries of Welfare patients, who had come to the clinic, without having their own private doctors.

At about the beginning of 1945, Hedy and Mrs. Glueck got busy to look for an apartment for us that would be suitable for a doctors office and at the same time for living quarters, and they found one on Ocean Avenue at the corner of Lincoln

Road, across the street from Prospect Park. The apartment was small, but we were lucky that we got it, because there was a shortage in apartments at that time. The rent was high for us, \$ 115.- a month, but it was a nice apartment house with about 80 apartments, and we liked it. We had two rooms for the office, a small windowless waiting room and a good-sized office room, and one bedroom and a living room, kitchen and bathroom for our living quarters.

There arose now the difficult problem of getting furniture for the apartment and equipment for the office. We had some savings, but by far not enough. The most important things were furniture for our bedroom. A trip to Fulton Street to the company Loeser solved that problem. We bought a beautiful complete set, to be paid up in relatively small instalments.

Then we had again enormous luck. The administrator of the Crown Heights Hospital, where I had my first job, was a Mrs. Wattell. She had taken a liking to me right from the beginning, and when I had told her later on, when I was already working in the Williamsburgh Maternity Hospital, that I had rented an apartment on Ocean Avenue, she told me that she had a lot of furniture for me, since she and her husband had decided to move to Florida. It so happened that they lived in the same block on Ocean Avenue, and they had stored a lot of their furniture in the basement. I went there to look at it and I did not believe my eyes. It were fine furniture, covered with linen to protect them from dust, 2 big armchairs, 1 sofa, 1 table, which could be converted from a small table into a big dining room table, chairs, fine small tables of all kinds, floor lamps, carpets, big and small ones etc., etc. They did

not want to give us all that as an outright gift, asked only for \$ 150.-. I looked at them and knew what they meant. And a short time later all these things were in our apartment. We had now enough, even for our waiting room, where the table often was opened and made big, when we had guests in the evening. All we needed now was office equipment and that we got also quickly from a company Beeber in Manhattan, complete, including 2 instrument cabinets, a scale, a waste receptacle, examining table, a fluoroscope, a floor lamp, an electro-cardiograph, a diathermy apparatus, to be paid up in small instalments. The only things I bought and paid in cash was a beautiful big desk, an upholstered desk chair, an upholstered chair for the patient, a filing cabinet, a waste-paper basket, a microscope, and great many instruments. All that, furniture and office equipment was paid up in the course of 2 or 3 years.

We had the bedroom for us and Johanna, and Francis slept in the livingroom on a couch. What helped me very much was my Spanish, which I spoke at that time already fluently. There were Spanish speaking nurses in the hospital, who started to send me Spanish speaking patients to my office, and Spanish speaking patients, whom I had delivered of their babies, who remained loyal and kept coming as patients to my office, some for many years. I had office hours every afternoon. The schedule in the hospital was arranged in such a way that I was free every afternoon. We were 3 doctors there, besides me & Dr. Kessler and a Dr. Kirchhausen. The latter came every day at 3 P.M. and stayed till 11 P.M. At 11 P.M. I came and stayed till 3 P.M. on the next day, when Dr. Kirchhausen came and stayed till 11 P.M. when Dr. Kessler came, who also stayed till 3 P.M. on the next

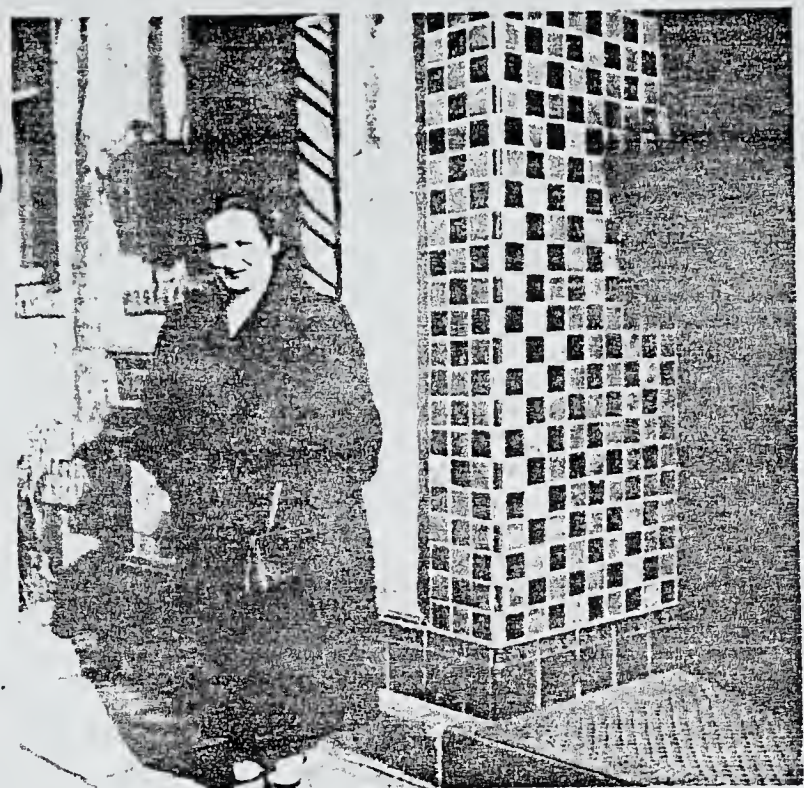
day. That meant that Dr. Kirchhausen worked daily for 8 hours, whereas I and Dr. Kessler worked each time for 16 hours, but were then free for 32 hours, and, what was especially good was that we were free every afternoon for our office hours. Only few patients came in the beginning, but the number increased with every day. My fee was rather low, between \$ 3.- and 5.- per office visit.

As mentioned before, we were members of the Ethical Culture Society and attended Sunday meetings quite often. Johanna attended the Sunday school and Francis was engaged as a Sunday school pianist and received a small salary, with which he contributed to our living expenses. I remember that he used to ask me almost every day how much I had earned, and was quite satisfied, when I could tell him that the income had increased.

I got once as a patient a very rich man from Venezuela, a Mr. Jugo, who liked besides me especially Francis, since he spoke Spanish. Francis was at that time already a pupil of our cousin Leon Erdstein, who was professor of music at the Young Men's Hebrew Association, a fine pianist, whom we called uncle Leon, and Francis had to go for lessons once a week to the Steinway Hall on West 57th Street in Manhattan. Mr. Jugo wanted to buy a fine piano and asked Francis to help him with that. Francis went to different piano companies and found a very fine one at the Baldwin company. He told them that he would bring them a customer and they promised him a commission. Mr. Jugo went then there with Francis and he really bought that very expensive piano, which was later shipped to Caracas in Venezuela, and as a result Francis got about \$ 500.- as commission and bought with that money an upright piano, of which

uncle Leon had approved, and so we got a piano into our apartment. Francis practiced then daily for hours. He also continued to paint, did not need Mr. Lerner anymore, and produced great many beautiful paintings, went out often into the Prospect Park with easel, canvas, and paints, painted also often in the house, and on Saturday afternoons he went often to the Art Students League on 57th Street in Manhattan, for drawing of nude models. After we had moved to Ocean Avenue, Johanna switched to another school on Washington Avenue at the corner of Classon Avenue, which she liked much better than the school on 2nd Street. She had a lot of new friends in our new neighborhood, who all went to that school on Washington Avenue. It should also be mentioned that Francis had become a Boy Scout and attended regularly meetings in the evening. He made great progress in piano playing under the guidance of uncle Leon, who was quite proud of him.

Success! Success! What a country! What a marvel of a country, which opened the doors for me and my family to immigrate. And then to allow me to work again in my profession as a doctor. No wonder that so many people, when they arrived here, threw themselves down and kissed the ground. A great, great country. They did not make it easy for anyone to come in. You had to have relatives or good friends to guarantee for you with an affidavit. They checked you out before they let you in. Hedy had to wait in Vienna for her visa, after I had left for Cuba, for over a year, oppressed by the Gestapo and threatened with deportation to Poland. And just at the time when the war had already broken out she arrived safely in Holland with Johanna, and they could still get on a boat and sail for America.



Feb. 1942



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